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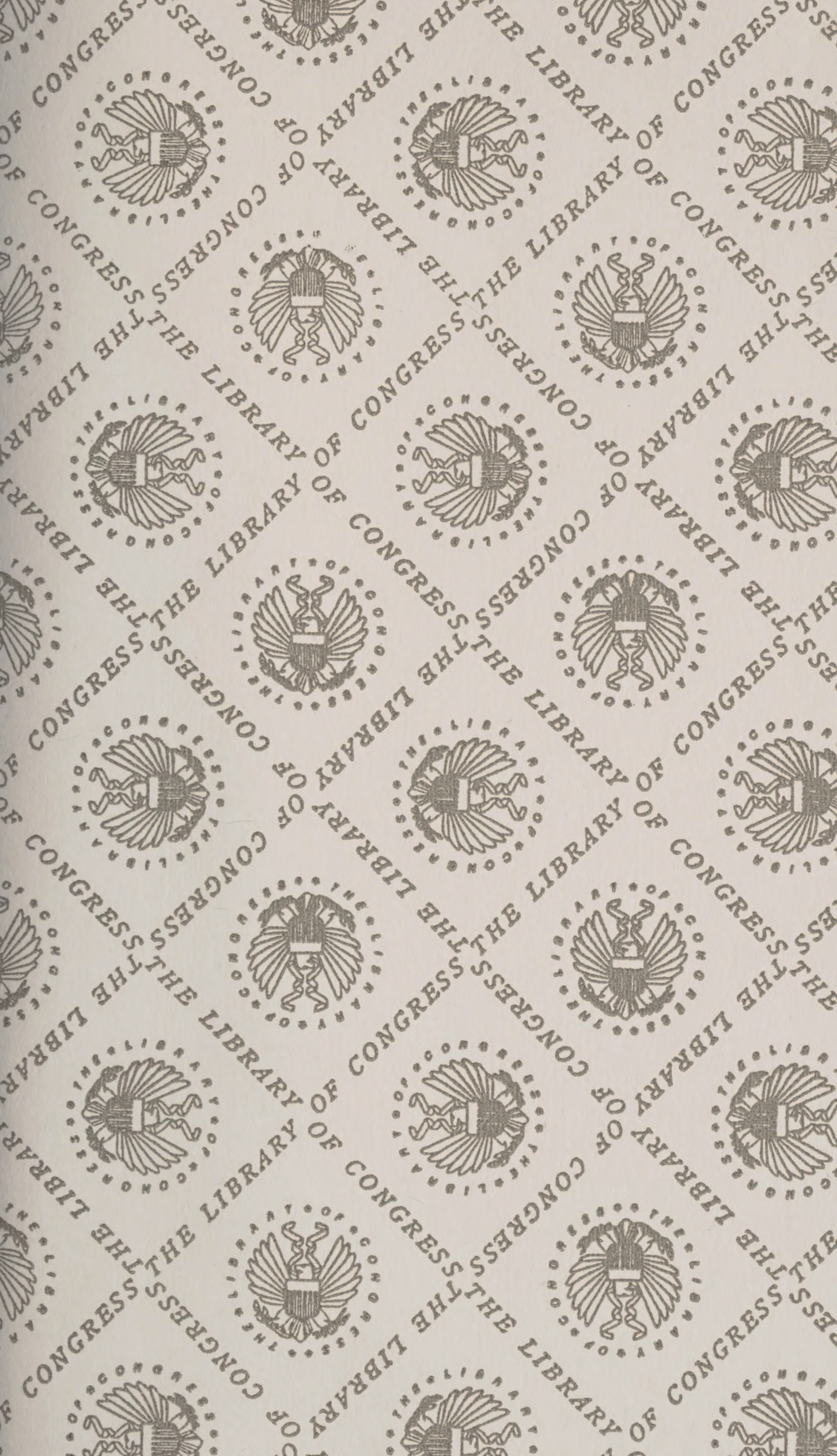
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WALSINGHAM,

THE GAMESTER.

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BY CAPT. FREDERIC CHAMIER, R. N.

AUTHOR OF

"LIFE OF A SAILOR," "BEN BRACE," &c.

——"I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will stand the hazard of the die."
SHAKSPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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WALSINGHAM,

THE GAMESTER.

CHAPTER I.

When the chilling winter of age checks the current of the blood,—when sickness and disease, distress and misery, cast a gloom over the valley of the shadow of death,—then it is that the mind looks back with horror on the black picture of its own degradation, and all the future is dark and dismal, without hope and without consolation. To those in the holy offices of religion how sedulously do the unhappy unburthen their minds, and how eagerly they solicit absolution! Even in their confessions they feel the load lightened, and experience, when they have made another a confidant in their weakness, that they have relieved themselves without adding to their neighbour's misfortunes. Thus the man deprived of parents, wife, and children,—the blighted branch on the blighted stem, sinking rapidly in the grave which yawns to receive him,—feels the consolation others have experienced as he proceeds to cleanse his foul bosom from the perilous stuff that runs within it.

It is true that mankind in general deceive themselves in the motives by which they are actuated; and perhaps even when they affirm that they are induced to publish their crimes, their exposures of a career of weakness and of vice, as much from a desire to serve as a beacon to others, (that, like the drunken Helot, they may repel, rather than attract,) as to unload the terrible weight that drags down their almost exhausted nature,—perhaps they may be impelled by a less noble motive, they may be induced to anatomise themselves from the want of some

greater stimulant; for those who, until poverty forced them from the path, were familiar with the greatest of all excitements, may feel a momentary relief when the pen embodies their thoughts, when they marshal their reflections on this ambiguous and distressing world, and when they retrace those stirring scenes, in which, notwithstanding their fallen and degraded state, they still in imagination seem to live, to move, and have their being. Happy indeed should he feel who finds that his example has been a warning to others, and that the records of crime have turned one man from that course which must inevitably end in poverty—must ruin the health and degrade the mind!

How far legislators are to blame, who by the plunder of the subject enrich the coffers of the state, is a point on which it is useless to insist; but surely that government has little to pride itself upon, which can allow a monopoly of vice, and by the exorbitant price paid for permission to erect and open these sinks of iniquity, themselves almost legalise fraud—nay, urge the necessity of its practice in order that the proprietors may be enabled to clear a sufficiency to pay that government.

Honesty wavers when poverty assaults: the man of an avaricious cast of mind can never view with indifference the piles of gold which glisten on the Spanish gambling-table, or look unmoved at the numerous *billets de banque* that are seen through the sliding boxes of the salon or Frascati's. In this country it is worse than either, because it is illegal to gamble, and yet it is sanctioned: the police are carefully excluded, the law has no eyes for the protection of the swindled, and when intoxication succeeds the first fury of continual losses, who can be answerable, or who can protect the unfortunate man from the pinching gripe of the professed gambler, the greedy and insatiable grasp of the practised swindler? We know the degradation of mind, the absolute ruin of health and property, which follows the path of those thus unhappily lured by their own proper protectors. The bridges which adorn the Seine are generally the last spot occupied by the living body of the gambler in France, and the Morgue shows the skeleton carcase of the plundered and the plunderer in all the horrid nakedness of deformity.

The lotteries in England for a time contributed to demoralise the poorer classes; whilst the taste for dress, and the prospect of obtaining a chance to gratify it, made that class on whom our comforts depend in an equal ratio with their honesty, swerve from the path of virtue in order to obtain that which chance rendered it almost impossible to possess. Thus the government

which sanctions gambling offers a premium upon dishonesty: but doubly culpable is that government which, pretending to wear the outward garb of sincerity, winks behind the false mask, and allows, yes publicly allows—what by *law* is prohibited. Look at the booths at a race: under the very eye of royalty must villany flourish, that villany being illegal. It is needless to carry this idea farther; indirectly we do what the French government does openly: both are to blame, both encourage dishonesty, both contribute to the ruin and demoralisation of the subject.

Still is the infatuation so great, that although we know the chances which are against us—we know the sum the proprietors *must* win in order to carry on the establishment, yet we go with a poor capital to fight against that which can command thousands—we stake our money against the fearful odds of superior capital and experienced dexterity.

When Robert Douglass had placed his last relative in the grave—had returned to his now solitary home, and gazed in silence round the desert of his occupation, he carefully counted the sum which remained his all in this world: he who had gone before had left nothing to increase the stock, and his whole fortune amounted to the immense sum of about three thousand pounds—a mere vegetation for life; and this was all that remained from the wreck of a much finer property.

For some time after his last relative's death, and his disappointments, Douglass led a retired life in a country village in England, the name of which we shall call Wilmington, and which was distant but a few miles from the metropolis. Of all monotonous lives, for a man who had travelled over nearly the whole world, that residence was the worst; the bickering scandal, which is inseparable from the small communities in the country, had very few charms for him;—in short, he cared not one straw whether Miss Jemima Wilkins had grown unexpectedly stout, and the next morning "most miraculously recovered her shape;" or whether Miss Clarissa Smith had eloped with the sexton of the village, and thus, by the kind offices of the last attendants of us all, buried her reputation in a grave prepared by her tempter. Douglass attended the village church with punctuality; and he did it more with the desire—the fatal failing of the idle—of destroying a few hours, than under the idea of a religious obligation. It so happened that near the pulpit was a pew capable of holding only two; and as Douglass wished to borrow as much importance upon as economical a

principle as possible, he took both seats, and sat alone in all his grandeur, to the very great annoyance of several of his most sincere and affectionate friends. One day in winter, when country churches are neither the warmest nor the driest of brick buildings, just as the clergyman had given out his text, and the rustle of leaves had subsided, occasioned by the young ladies hunting for the chapter and verse as if to catch the preacher in an error, the heavy footsteps of an elderly man were heard as he walked a few paces into the interior. Every eye was instantly directed towards the stranger; and notwithstanding the place, curiosity expressed itself in whispers, and the attention of the congregation was turned towards the old gentleman.

He wore a rather old acquaintance in the shape of a great-coat, and which certainly would have been none the worse for a hot iron and a piece of brown paper. He seemed to be fatigued with his walk, and leaned over a pew which would have contained two more than inhabited it. He gave that intelligible look at the inmates, as much as to say, "Let me in;" but Christian charity was not the leading principle of the old women, who began immediately to spread themselves out, thereby apparently occupying the whole of the pew, and looking up significantly, as much as to respond, "Only see how you would incommode us!" The poor old gentleman advanced a little farther; but there seemed a general fear of contamination or of rheumatism, for some small rain had fallen, and his rough coat seemed like plants covered with the morning dew. (Brummel once remarked, that he had caught cold by being put in a room with a damp stranger.) The intruder was evidently rather deaf, for he kept his right hand to his ear, making a kind of trumpet, and twisting his mouth over to the left side with the intention of opening the tube of hearing as much as possible, he continued to advance towards the pulpit by slow and measured paces, (for the clergyman dropped his voice at the conclusion of his sentence in such a manner as to be nearly inaudible,) until he reached Douglass. He instantly opened the door, and receiving a bow of acknowledgment, the stranger took his seat and continued to pay the greatest attention to the discourse. When the blessing was given and the congregation on the stir, the new acquaintance offered his hand, which was instantly taken; and as Douglass walked out of the church, the stranger placed his arm within his,—and although Douglass felt that the coat of the stranger and his were not made by the same tailor, and that one was new and the other old, yet he somehow felt a pride at having done a

commonly civil action, more particularly as his neighbours had acted in a contrary manner. Douglass thought he observed the sneers of some of his old female friends, and the gibes and laughs of the younger; for when the old gentleman put his hat on his head, he stood as good a representation of a bankrupt clothesman as Rag Fair could produce. If this man has no money, thought Robert, he does not act up to the advice, "Never be poor and show poor."

For some time the stranger was silent. He appeared more infirm than Robert had supposed, and he leaned as heavily on his arm as a lame man does on a crutch. At last he spoke, and there was a mildness in his manner that was captivating in the extreme.

"I am," said he, addressing Douglass, "much obliged to you for your civility; for although it is said that in the house of God all are equal, yet those ladies seemed to think otherwise. They are fools for their pains!—they might have done a more gracious act than in denying rest to the weary, or in hindering one who cannot remain much longer in this world from hearing comfortably the voice and the instruction of the clergyman. Pray what is your name?" said the old gentleman.

"Robert Douglass."

"Have you no other Christian name but Robert?"

"None," replied Robert.

"The name," continued the elderly gentleman, "is not unknown to me; for, many years since, when I was wrecked near Madras, I received much attention from a gentleman of that name."

"It was my father," replied Robert.

The old gentleman stopped, looked at him long in the face, unheeding the titters of those who passed, and who, like all idle blockheads, seemed to wish to be informed of what wonderful conversation could take place between two men. "Your father must be numbered with the dead, I should imagine; for had he lived to this day, he would have been about eighty-four,—an age few attain who have lived for thirty-two years in that country: but he was a strong, temperate, and active-minded man."

"He has been dead about six years," replied Robert.

"He ought to have died a wealthy man," said the stranger, "for he held high situations, and although he lived like a nabob, he must have left some lacs of rupees. And you," he continued, "how comes it that you are buried alive in this village! You should be more actively employed than in the tattling company of old maidens or the solitary walk of a churchyard."

"My life has been unfortunate, and that which I inherited," replied Robert, "is almost gone—all but a bare sufficiency: I was robbed of it, plundered of it, and the perjurer lives and flourishes."

"The way of the world, sir," replied the stranger: "your thief is a nobleman until the gallows exalts him above his proper sphere. But did you gamble, did you lose it at play?—tell me the truth, sir."

"I never played a card in my life," he replied. "I lost my money by a tissue of misfortunes, by the operation of a cruel law, by the ignorance of my adviser, by the perjuries of others."

"Nothing more common," replied the stranger: "false witnesses are as common in England as blackberries; it is of late years become a profession. But the law would ruin any man in the expenses upon justice."

"And therefore," resumed Robert, "as I cannot hold up my head where I once could do so, I have retired to this village; and am not sorry I have done so, since it affords me the pleasure of welcoming an old friend of my father's. This is my house: though small, it is convenient; and although I am obliged to forego the luxuries, yet I have the necessaries of life. Pray, walk in, sir; and if you are inclined to pass some time in this retreat, allow me to offer you a bed, and whatever my humble roof contains. But as I have made you acquainted with my name, will you allow me to know that which must have been familiar to my father?"

The stranger walked in without answering; he placed his hat on a peg, shook the wet and rubbed the dirt from his coat, hung it up, pulled the tails down to avoid any wrinkles, produced an old pocket-handkerchief and flourished it over his hat, pocketed his gloves, wiped his feet, and then walked into a small front parlour. Instead of warming his hands, he began to take off some of the coals, until he left the mere skeleton of a fire, although he shivered with cold. He took up so close a position as to endanger his inexpressibles.

"You are extravagant, Mr. Robert,—that is the name, ay?" and he took out an old almost worn-out pocket-book, and after rubbing some animation into his hands he wrote down, "Robert, the son of John Douglass." "Now," he continued, "who is your banker, or your lawyer, or any body you know in London where I may find or hear of you; because if you come that way I shall be most happy to see you, and I sometimes like to make inquiries for my friends instead of their being

obliged to hunt me up. But come near the fire; you must be cold so far away."

It was quite evident to Robert that his friend was a character, and although he wished him any where else than in the place of which he had possessed himself, for he was a screen when it was least wanted, yet he resolved to humour him to the height of his bent.

The conversation soon took a much more extended range than finding fault; and when five o'clock came, they had tried many subjects, and amongst others gambling.—"Of all vices," said the stranger, "this is the worst. The libertine may be reclaimed; the drunkard may listen to the warnings of disease; the prodigal may become sensible of the necessity of frugality; the liar may see the beauty of truth; the reprobate may be charmed by virtue: but the gambler never can be reclaimed. I speak not now of those who idle away, or while away. whichever you like, an hour, holding thirteen pieces of painted pasteboard, and putting down in silence the same colour and kind as their adversaries might have played; I speak not of the innocent amusement of a round-table party, or of those who, to gratify curiosity, pay the penalty of being inquisitive: but I speak of the real downright gamester, whose only occupation is play—who dreams of hazard, who awakes but to rattle the dice, and calculates nothing but chances—whose whole existence consists in robbing, or perhaps wishing to possess himself of the property of another—to whom the ravings of the ruined are music, whose enjoyment is purchased by the sacrifice of others, whose smiles are provoked by the tears of the distressed, whose whole soul and body is bent upon the destruction of his neighbour for the aggrandizement of himself. That man is beyond the reach of redemption. Gambling is to the mind what opium is to the body; deprive the one or the other of the now necessary excitement, and the patient dies. I do not speak these words as idle loungers retail the borrowed sentences of great writers,—too well I know the consequences from the horror I have experienced: I lost my only son from this infernal vice, and painful as it is to me to recall the bitter lesson, yet I shrink not from the task of warning others from that destructive path. My poor, poor boy! yes, willingly would I lay down those riches, which make me the envy of my neighbours, for the pleasure of again folding you in my arms; and as I bathed your face from the tears of my heart, pour out my blessings and forgiveness on your repentant head! But he is gone for ever!

never more shall I gaze upon his face, never more shall I listen to the animated description which youth gives when pleasure is the subject; but now an old decrepid pilgrim, fast verging to that end where I shall again rest near him, and where the staff of age shall be thrown aside, and the quiet of the Christian's grave obtained." Here the old gentleman's feelings got the better of his resolution, and after wiping his eyes and going to the window with the intention of concealing his emotion, he returned again to his seat, and taking Robert by the hand, he said: "After dinner I will hold up a mirror which shall scare you, if you are a gambler; I will convince you of the folly, the madness, the iniquity of the act; and as I am already wearied, I will accept your offer of a bed. My portmanteau is at the public-house where I alighted as the coach passed through. I had intended proceeding onwards to-night to Cheltenham; but I am feeble and ill, and want the requisite stamina for the undertaking." Saying which, he arose, and taking down his great-coat, he again removed some few specks of dirt, and was proceeding to wear it, when Robert suggested that as he was younger, he could go and have the portmanteau conveyed to his house. "No," he replied, "I will do it myself;" and although faltering in his steps, he crossed the street, and shortly afterwards Robert saw him return carrying his own luggage, and tottering fearfully at every step.

From the words which had escaped him, and the extreme contradiction between his expressions and his apparent condition, Robert was anxious if possible to glean some records of his life. His name he had carefully concealed; his portmanteau was without an address; his hat had the word "Golgotha," the place of a skull, marked therein; and his pocket-handkerchief had hardly a corner whereon to fix an initial;—yet had he talked of the wealth which made others envious, he had hinted that he would lay down *all* for one glimpse of his departed son, and his conversation was so much above the common run of familiar phrases that Robert was lost in conjecture. It was evident he was of a miserly turn: the attention to his coat and hat, the manner in which he deprived himself of the fire, the niggard care with which he fed the flame, all convinced Robert that if he had a fortune, it had been one of the many saved, not made.

During his absence, Robert mounted two bottles of good old port, and placed them not far from the fire. The evening was closing in, and the drizzling rain rendered it more obscure than

was usual at that season of the year. The little fire was stirred, which Robert ventured to increase; and when the curtains were drawn, the shutters fastened, the *two* candles lighted, the table-cloth clean, and the silver polished, Robert flattered himself, (for he afterwards looked back with some satisfaction upon the remembrance of that evening,) although the home was small, it was comfortable, and while the wind increased, and the rain fell in torrents, he and his aged companion were sheltered from both, and in the enjoyment of all that the frugal could require.

CHAPTER II.

Douglass directed the servant, a rather plump-looking red-armed country-girl, to assist the stranger with his load; and shortly he heard him stumping about over his head. The maid was instructed to tell him that the sheets were before the kitchen fire, and begged to know if he would have one in his room. This last he refused in a sullen manner, saying that three fires in a house were sufficient to warm Windsor Castle. Douglass resolved not to make any addition to his usual Sunday's cheer, which consisted of a piece of roast-beef, some bursting potatoes, and a Yorkshire-pudding: a small plum-pudding, was to form the centre of the repast, whilst some apples and dried fruit brought up the rear.

It was just six o'clock when the stranger entered the parlour; and no man could have recognised, in the clean gentlemanly deportment, the ragman resurrectionist of the morning. His hair, white by nature, had been carefully powdered, and his whole appearance would have done credit to a finished courtier. Douglass now saw what a tailor and a powder-puff could do for a man: the stiff air of the first acquaintance was superseded by an easy smile, his manner had changed with his habits, and scarcely ever could Robert remember to have seen a gentleman at his age who had fewer of the dirty appendages of seventy. With a good appetite, seeing he was most heartily welcome, he began his dinner; and although the fire burned brightly, and the sherry and the port were produced, he never once made a remark upon the extravagance of the repast. He asked if Robert was generally as comfortable as he appeared to be; and being assured that he had made no addition to his dinner, the stranger expressed himself pleased, and his heart soon began to warm with the wine.

The frugal fare finished, Robert begged him to accept of a large arm-chair, and to turn towards the fire. They drew the table a little nearer, and placing the port wine within reach of both, might have challenged the world to have shown a happier couple, at least in appearance. It was one of those delectable December evenings when the rain seemed to come from a fire

man's engine, and falling with such regularity on the windows, that a novice might fancy the winter was employed to wash away the dust of the summer, and that the task was not easily performed.

"I have not known for five years the pleasure I experience at this moment," began the stranger: "a kind calm satisfaction steals over my heart, and life, which this morning I would have laid down without paying a doctor's fee to have avoided so doing, now seems worth preserving. It is five years since I lost my only child: he was six-and-twenty years of age, and a handsomer man breathed not in Europe. From that hour I became a weed thrown upon the wide ocean of existence, if carried by the current north or south I cared not; I wandered over the world a poor old miserable being, I hated the society of men, and I dreaded that of the other sex; I became indifferent as to my dress, the luxuries of life I detested, and when I heard the laugh and merriment of others, I flew from it like a stricken deer with the barbed arrow rankling in its side. For five years I have never felt the ease, the comfort, the relief of the load I carried, that I do at this minute; and such is the extraordinary change which has crept over me, that I hardly feel inclined to hold up the mirror to you which before dinner I had promised to produce, in order to warn you from the dreadful, dangerous path of gambling."

Robert begged the stranger on no account to return to his sorrows, but if possible to forget them, and for once afford him the gratification of believing that he had been instrumental to his happiness.

"No, no," he replied; "we have all our duties to perform in this life, and mine is to save the purchase of experience in others. And now to my task: the story is long, the subject is painful, but the moral is good.

"After my having remained," he began, "a bachelor until I was fifty-five years of age, I conceived a violent passion for a lady of thirty, who at the expiration of six weeks became my wife. About a year after my marriage, my wife was safely delivered of a male child, which was christened Henry. His early youth was not distinguished by any very particular circumstance: he grew up to manhood without being a poet at twelve, or a sailor at thirteen. The great error *I* made: and that was, not obliging him to have a profession. I had in India amassed an ample fortune, and the settlements on my wife, which must have descended to him, were sufficient to have gratified the vanity of

even a nobleman. To this first error of mine I am inclined to attribute all the mischief which followed his steps. There is no mistake more fatal than the encouragement of idleness: it is, as the copy says, the root of all evil, I never knew an idle man who, if he escaped burthening his neighbours, avoided being vicious: the mind that is not directed to one object, generally neglects all, or only flippantly skims the surface over which it hurries. The first consequence of idleness was love. Love, as Johnson says, has no power but over those it finds unemployed: so it occurred that my son Henry at the age of nineteen imagined himself in love with the second daughter of a respectable clergyman, who was encumbered with a large family, and not a very ample fortune. On my discovering this fatal step, I opposed all the authority of a parent. It has been urged by some authors, that, providing no blot is upon the fair fame of the lady, and that an equality of birth is beyond a doubt, the parent has no sufficient grounds for withholding his consent: but the man who first circulated this erroneous doctrine contributed his portion of mischief to the world; for if the law does not consider the act of a minor valid, it is because that law imagines the mind not sufficiently formed, and consequently leaves him under the direction of the parent. The more I opposed this foolish match, the more resolutely he maintained his determination to gain his point. I loved—dearly, fondly loved him, and his mother doted with maternal affection on her offspring: never had we differed in opinion, and now we both were the ruin of our son from this ill-placed affection. He argued, and justly, that the daughter of a clergyman of the Established Church was equal to any man in rank; and in this, as I am no leveller of the church, no overthrower of its ancient establishment, no violater of its rights or purloiner of its wealth, I fully and frankly acknowledged it was the youth of both parties, and their exact equality of age, which caused my dissent: for although the woman may be of a sufficient age at nineteen, and it is dangerous in most cases to allow them a settled plan of life before marriage, and although I would rather they married at that age or twenty than any other, yet I did not consider this argument as applicable to my son; for no man should marry until he is past his thirty-fourth year:—the mind is then properly formed, the dearly-bought experience of youth will guide him steadily through life, and his affections, not the hasty ebullition of youth, will be lasting and sincere: besides which, at the age of forty the woman would be verging upon wrinkles, whilst the man would be in the prime of life. I took a middel

path,—since I found objection, positive objection—only likely to hasten the event. I proposed that they should wait until he was of age, and then, if their minds and affections remained unaltered, I would celebrate his arriving at maturity and his marriage on the same day. In the mean time he was to travel abroad, and thus rub off a little of the rust which seemed to clog his understanding.

"This plan appeared to give general satisfaction, and my son, after vowing all vows of constancy, departed with a friend, an old schoolfellow, but who was nearly eight years his senior in life, for the alleged purpose of crossing to France, and extending his trip to Italy. I blessed him at parting, his mother hung upon his neck, the tears of all were shed abundantly, and even now—but I am childish and childless—I cannot restrain these burning drops which course so rapidly down my poor old furrowed face. He had never deceived me, he had never told me a falsehood,—he had ever been candid, ingenuous, open. He promised to remain abroad for two years; he had unlimited credit—in short, there was nothing left undone to render him comfortable and respectable. Imagine, sir,"—said the old man, his face crimsoning with vexation, "imagine, I say, my horror, my surprise, my disgust,—most undisguised disgust, when I heard that the carriage I had purchased for his comfort, that very night contained the person he had abjured for two years; and that, instead of the Continent, he had taken the North road, was married, and most seriously repentant before a week had elapsed:

'The lovely toy so fiercely sought,
Had lost its charm by being caught,'

as Byron says; he found himself shackled, hampered, tied to a stake for life.

"Repentance ever comes too late; but his was sincere. He wrote a most affectionate letter, praying us to forgive him, and I need scarcely say that we did so; he and his bride were received into our house,—for we thought it more advisable to guide his mind in the right way than to leave it to the meanderings of its own fickleness. They managed the first two months pretty well, the families became intimate, and I found in the excellent disposition and well-informed mind of the clergyman every thing to admire. It was, however, about this time that both parties spoke often of a Continental trip, and once more was the carriage laden for that route. As his allowances were

large, there was no occasion to starve the cause. We saw them go with hope and spirit, high and fresh: they started, and arrived safe in that sink of iniquity, Paris.

"It is but justice to say that Henry was as idle as the father of all mischief could have wished. His mode of life was disreputable in the extreme: he could not study, but he would lie for hours on the sofa smoking those abominations, cigars. Rolled up in a fanciful dressing-gown, with yellow slippers—and even Turkish in imagination, I verily believe he esteemed it a crime to 'think'—hour after hour of the most brilliant part of life was consumed in this dirty, disgusting, unmanly habit, and one might as well have slept on the counter of a tobacconist's shop as reclined a head upon his pillow. Nothing tends more to ensure love than decency and cleanliness: Swift has said

'If decency brings no supplies
Opinion falls, and beauty dies;'

and the man who indulges in the misnamed gratification of putting the smoke into his mouth for one moment in order to puff it out the next, must find a partner equally ignorant with the Turkish women, and equally under authority, to either sanction or allow it.

"She was one taught to place all confidence in her husband; and whilst her eyes were dazzled with the gaudiness of my son's equipage, and the homage paid to her beauty, she overlooked the annoyance which then she could not appreciate. But now she lived in an atmosphere of tobacco; she was haunted by the idle footsteps of her husband; he lounged about the rooms like an unquiet spirit; he could neither devote an hour to a book, or a quarter to a letter; he resembled an everlasting steam-boat in motion, and was winded afar from his smoke and his smell. But still there was no sin in him; the vice, the radical root was in his heart, and he soon felt its influence. 'My dear,' said his wife to him, 'why don't you go out and amuse yourself? surely Paris has novelty,—novelty is always desirable; go, my dear, to Pere Lachaise, the Louvre, or wander amongst this gay people on the Boulevards.'—'Not I,' he would answer; 'I have no curiosity to see a few bedizened grave-stones, or to read the general lying epitaphs with which every mother thinks fit to compliment her son, or every daughter to daub for a parent. What am I to see in the Louvre but a parcel of pictures? and to be obliged to turn over a catalogue to find out the subject.

Besides, if I had no other objection but the following,—it would be fatal, they do not permit smoking.'

"Poor Eliza, the best, the tenderest, the most enchanting of her sex, only responded by a deep sigh: she looked at him, she watched the working of his countenance, and in spite of her general guarded manner, a smile of pity crossed her face. 'Ay, ay, I see,' said my son, 'you are getting preciously tired of me, and think, no doubt, that there is some truth in the proverb, "Marry in haste, and repent at leisure." I wish that child of yours was born, and then you would have something to mind, without bothering me by your observations and advice. Oh, Lord! how thankful I should be if some Christian of my acquaintance would come to this cursed outlandish place!—Ah, now you cry! Why, what the devil have I said to make you cry? Is this your love? is this the way you are pleased to show your contentment?—or, rather, is this the mode by which you seek to upbraid me?'

"The poor little wife said not a word, but she hastily endeavoured to dry her eyes and to force a smile upon her cheeks; but Nature was true to herself, and deception had not learned to conquer her. 'Well,' said my son, 'since my presence gives you pain, I will relieve you by my absence.'—'What time, my dear, will you return to dinner?' said that charming creature. 'Oh, six or eight, or perhaps not at all,' was the reply. 'Why, are you so dependent upon me, that you must have me to feed you, or to tickle you? I believe it is true, that "women are but children of a larger growth." There is a looking-glass and a sugar-plum, and you ought to be in paradise.' With this unfeeling, insolent remark, he had his great-coat placed upon his shoulders, his gloves given him; but he actually exerted himself so much, that he placed his own hat on his own head.

"I have merely mentioned this conversation in order to show that boys are not intended for husbands, and that a person ought to know his own mind before he seeks to govern others. Love is a very pretty moth; but each touch brushes away its beauties. —However, to proceed.

"On that fatal day when the conversation above mentioned took place, it did occur that my son found one of his schoolfellows. He seems to have rejoiced in an excuse to be absent from his wife, with whom he was thoroughly satiated; and that evening, after dining with his friend, he attended a soirée given by the mother, and there saw the sister, a girl of about seventeen, described as lovely in the extreme. His mind, without

occupation, soon gave way to the new pleasure of this girl's society; he remained until the last, he hardly quitted her for a moment, and when he retraced his steps to his hotel, situated in the Rue Richelieu, he had already entertained thoughts which were too sure to ripen in the soil which only received one object. In the mean time his expenses were increased—presents were purchased of great value, and after two or three weeks almost living in his friend's house, and having perfectly neglected his home, his wife, his all—but his cigar, and having driven this new attachment to the very Pere Lachaise and Louvre he before despised, it was evident that his heart had received an impression very likely to erase that occasioned by the charms of his wife.

"Meantime, the gentle, meek Eliza was slowly recovering the sight of which love had deprived her: she found herself perfectly neglected, for when in her society, he was invariably hasty, morose, unkind, ungrateful. It was her letter to her sister that first gave me uneasiness; for although I had watched with some alarm the increased amount of his expenditure, yet as he never had mentioned one word on the subject of gambling, I confess I did not anticipate the storm about to burst over our heads. In the letter written by Eliza to her sister, there was a marked difference of manner: instead of the gay and animated description—the numerous retailings of anecdotes, the follies and the fashions, with which the letters of ladies are usually filled, it was a cold production, in which it was evident that apprehension had triumphed over affection; but there was such lurking love, and such fear of losing it, that when it was shown to me, I remember being obliged to leave the room to avoid the expression of my fears. That letter I have preserved, and here it is. I preserved it in the first instance from admiration of the writer; and now, as a reproach to myself for not having instantly crossed the water to have reclaimed my son. But parents are as blind as lovers, and we are slow to believe what we wish to discredit. I will read it to you: it is in vain you would urge me to desist; it is a punishment I owe myself, and a warning I owe to you." He then read as follows:

"Paris.

"MY EVER DEAREST MARY,

"My last letter, written one short week since, was penned under very different circumstances from this: the excitement occasioned by visiting strange places, of listening to a strange people, and of following strange fashions, is passed; now I feel

quite tired of the place and the people, and find myself alone in the midst of a populous city. But it is quite the contrary with Henry, who at first remained entirely at home, but now is estranged from it. His mornings, noons, and almost his nights, are spent with a family of the name of Stanhope; the brother of his admiration having been an old schoolfellow of Henry's, who is just emancipated from his college. I cannot tell you how painfully jealous I have become; for I see—even *I* see a total alteration of his manner. Instead of the eager morning salutations, the constant kind attention, and the unremitted affection, I find him cold, reserved, silent, and sometimes angry. He seems to have left me entirely; or when I am so fortunate as to occupy one moment's conversation, I am sure to hear of the charms, the *unrivalled* charms of this Louisa. Had this blow come suddenly, I should have sunk under it; but it has approached gradually, and I as gradually became habituated to his absence. In vain I have asked him to return to, or let me return to you; for although I know I am wrong in even asking to leave him, yet I feel I cannot much longer bear this silent neglect without a murmur; and, oh! my dearest Mary, it is vain I should attempt to describe the feelings which creep over me. Oftentimes I think how foolish, how weak, how woman-like are my fears; because I see this girl surrounded by her family and her brothers—they know that Henry is married, and she likewise knows it, and yet I cannot help feeling that they may be thrown off their guard from the very knowledge of the fact. Then that I, who adored him, loved him, cherished him,—yes, my God! that ever I can entertain fears of his constancy or of his affection!—I had written thus far, when Henry came home, flushed with animation, and in a humour to which he has long been a stranger. It appears that Mr. Stanhope took him to a place called Frascati's, and that Henry, who has not the smallest inclination to gamble, threw down a napoleon,—a kind of fee which he thought requisite to pay for his intrusion, on a table, the name of the game being strange to him. After walking about the room quite heedless of the stake, he returned to the table, and was astonished to find a heap of gold and notes lying there. One of the servants of the establishment pointed to the money, and told him that his original stake had doubled itself to that amount; upon which he very wisely withdrew, and came home in so good a humour that I almost wish he would occasionally visit that place, of which previously to this day I had conceived the most serious horror. His winnings amounted to five hundred and twelve na-

poleons, the colour on which he placed his napoleon having won nine times following.—But, Mary, to think for one moment that the paltry sum above mentioned, and which by his signature he may procure every day of the week, should have rendered him happy, and excited him so much, is another painful idea. Every thing seems to please him, however trifling, but myself;—and yet I am ungrateful in my thoughts, for he kissed me fervently just now, and is going, dear good fellow! to dine at home to-day, and his young friend is coming also.—The fashions of the day are still the same,' &c. &c.

"The rest of the letter," said the old gentleman, folding up the despatch, "is on the subjects on which ladies generally write one to another,—family news, bonnets, new-invented gloves, and a treasure of a shoemaker or a lady's maid; but in the part I have read to you, you will trace the first false step since his marriage;—you will see that, having married before his mind was ripened into a steady affection, before he could appreciate the devotion of one of the most lovely of her sex, he had given way to a new passion, he had allowed his heart to lean towards another, and he had taught himself to believe that his wife was not necessary to his happiness. This strong excitement remained until gambling, like a stronger poison, drove out, or for a moment killed, the other; and you will find that in destroying partially the second love, it entirely quenched the first, and left his wife a prey to anguish and to distrust."

CHAPTER III.

The old gentleman was considerably exhausted, and he required some stimulant to recover him. Robert therefore recommended the wine; and after wiping his eyes and drinking a glass, he started afresh with his anecdote, and thus continued:

"It appears that after the dinner mentioned in the letter, Henry and his friend agreed to visit the gambling-houses in the Palais Royal, finishing the evening at the Salon, the father of all the mischief. The same games were played at all, until he found himself ushered into the splendid apartments of the Salon des Etrangers. Here was a round table on which hazard was played, and here my son took a seat, and remained in it until two o'clock in the morning. At first he was again successful, but latterly he lost back all he had won, with some trifle besides.

"He returned to his wife about three o'clock. She had remained awaiting his arrival: although under all the pain and all the sickness to which women are subject during pregnancy, yet was she resolved to prove her devotion to him beyond a doubt,—even in a gambler's mind. Finding her still in the saloon, Henry, so far from being grateful for the attention, rebuked her for her folly, and in a tone of voice at once authoritative and ungenerous, he desired her to go to bed. His manner was that of an enraged tyrant; he walked hastily to and fro in the room, and when she lingered, he even threatened to push her from his presence.

"'Never, never, dearest Henry, did I expect,' she said, 'to hear such words from your lips!—never, when I gave you my hand at the altar, did I imagine that six months afterwards you would spurn me from you! I know your goodness of heart, and I feel that your own words will be a greater rebuke to your mind than any I could utter even if I would. Kiss me, dearest, and I will go. I have been in great pain, and I watched the hand of that little watch, your first present to me, hoping for your return; but now you are not what you were, or I should not have had to solicit that little mark of affection which even now you withhold.'

"He looked at her apparently more in sorrow than in anger,

whilst she with her bed candle in one hand advanced the other to his shoulder, and holding her pretty face as inviting him to kiss her, she remained watching the working of his countenance, whilst the smile of hope which played over her pale features might have tempted the most obdurate.

" 'Go, go,' he said, pushing her gently from him,—'go; and when next you feel indisposed, you had better sleep, than spy upon your husband.' She burst into tears, and left the room. Ah, fatal is the word, the voice of unkindness upon the heart of the truly affectionate! How many a man has unintentionally utterēd what his pride forbade him to recall! and how many are made miserable by the mere intonation of voice in the person they love! In vain she endeavoured to conceal her distress—her agitation of mind produced a serious sickness, and before three days had witnessed the inattention of Henry to a sick wife by day, and his absence by night, his hope of becoming a father had vanished, and the prospect of being a widower was more than probable. To me he even neglected to write an account of the accident which had occurred; and although his wife constantly sent the maid to urge him to this filial duty, yet love, and affection, and duty, and propriety, were dead within him, and all were buried in the gambler's mind. She recovered slowly, for she was reserved for many sorrows:—

'Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would meet.'

From the fall of hope in regard to being a mother, she fell into a low state of sickness: the indifference—the growing indifference amounting almost to hatred in her husband, the resolution with which she endeavoured to bear it, soon completely undermined her beauty and sapped her health; the attractive powers she once possessed were gone, and she had no enticement to lure back her fugitive husband but her voice, and he seldom came within the reach of that soft persuasive woman, to be recalled from his erroneous path. She wrote another letter to Mary, in which she more plainly alluded to the severed affection of her husband, and once more she mentioned the name of Louisa Stanhope; but it was more than evident that she entertained some fears that although gambling might have alienated the affections of Henry from herself, yet that Louisa still occupied some portion of his thoughts and time was certain. This letter was never shown to me; it was agreed by my daughter-in-law's family that I should only become incensed still more against my

son, and they looked forward with hope that the influence of their sister might still prove to be of some avail.

"In a few words I shall draw you the character of Louisa Stanhope. Of her beauty—that fatal gift, I shall merely say, that as much perfection as the painter's art could throw into the form and face of Venus might be found in her. She was rather dark in complexion, her hair and eyes being as black as night; every feature was correct, and her mouth has been even represented as surpassing that of any other woman alive. Her education had been neglected—she had been poisoned by novels. However light the trash, so long as it contained a love-story, on this she fed and fattened. To her, the man who smoked, swore, and gambled, was perfection; and she in vain imagined that the hero of romance could be concealed in the demure look, the cautious expressions, and the timid manner, which might cover the generous and affectionate disposition of mind, or the bold and determined courage of the heart. Henry was exactly to her imagination; in him were all the accomplishments of such flippant folly in perfection: he was handsome, and, like most gamblers, generous; he was bold, forward, authoritative. It is strange how women like such men, for they would rather be governed than courted, and he who is bold in love, will very seldom fail of success: your timid man always is rebuked; your bold man, who seems to have for his motto, 'They can conquer who believe they can,' is the surest of his love. Louisa saw, and loved him: the impediment of marriage was no bar to her affections; she had read of happiness obtained even by such rashness, and the more the danger, the more she seemed to court it; she encouraged him, she clandestinely accepted his presents, and he soon made her the depositary of every sentiment of his heart. He was now perfectly estranged from his wife, he even told her that she was painful to his sight. The climax of her woes was fast approaching: for two days and two nights she never heard or saw him; the fourth brought her a letter without any date, desiring her to return to her parents, as he never more intended to see her. The letter mentioned that Louisa Stanhope, now with him, would for ever share his heart, his fortune, and his affections.' This, which would have killed others, partially restored her to strength and temporary health. Without writing one word, she immediately left Paris. She arrived in England, and hastening to the quiet retreat of her father, she drove to the house about nine o'clock, at which time the pious father had assembled his family and his servants, and was im-

ploring the great God of all to shower down his blessings upon mankind. No sooner was she liberated from the carriage, than she rushed like a maniac to the long-known room; and as her father was about, in rather a subdued tone, to supplicate the protection of his Maker, the door was violently thrown open, and a loud shriek announced her presence. That shriek was re-echoed by all: there, in the midst of them, stood a being unknown to any; her features were half concealed by the disordered hair, and though visible, were so altered by care and sickness, that the parent knew not his own, or the sister the being of her affection. 'Tis me, 'tis Eliza,' she cried, and fell prostrate on the floor: 'oh, save me! for I am all alone.' She fainted, and fortunately she did so, for such was the horror of the scene, that had it continued none could have borne it. What followed is beyond description; the scene of wo, of misery, of sorrow, baffles all words, all power of delineation.

"She was removed instantly, and two days elapsed before we knew the worst. I was sent for directly, but I was forbidden to see her,—the medical gentleman strictly desired that none should be admitted but her mother; and rather would I that she never had returned to reason, and to comparative health, than have heard from the mouth of my daughter-in-law—from her who was like my own flesh and blood, the base, unmanly, ungenerous, horrible, and unnatural behaviour of my son—my only boy. Oh, never, never shall I forget the feelings of that moment! I could have stabbed her and smiled, as she poisoned the very stream of my existence: I hated with such a hatred that no words can convey, and in the bitter ravings of my maniac heart I cursed her for ever and for ever! The very intellect with which God had endowed me was deranged: the very son with which he had blessed me was made a villain, too plainly to admit of exculpation; the very daughter whom I loved as my own was the harbinger of my wo!

"I was conveyed home, and long did I linger in a state which deprived me of the management of my affairs, or the remembrance of my sorrows: during that time Eliza died. I have been told that excess of grief may sometimes relieve the patient, and that when misfortunes come so heavily, the human heart can withstand the shock; but her fortitude was gone, and her love remained. She lingered and lingered: in vain the good father attempted to administer consolation from that source from which most can derive it; in vain he pointed to Heaven, and prayed that his daughter might receive the blessing of resolution

to withstand the assault; gradually and gradually life gently ebbed away; she never spoke from the moment that in my madness I cursed her, but, surrounded by her family, she fixed her steady gaze upon her mother, and sometimes convulsively grasping her hand, she would endeavour to articulate. None could distinguish the sounds; the efforts grew weaker and weaker, and seven days from the moment of her first discovery of the cause she died without a struggle and without a groan.

"It was six months from the time of her decease before I was allowed to be made acquainted with her death; and from that moment has a cloud hung over my happiness which no lightning will ever dissipate. I will not sorrow you with my sorrows, neither will I call more tears than those which I have seen fall during the recital of my anecdote from your eyes. Hard must be the heart, and unenviably inclosed within itself, that softens not at the miseries of age, or for the misfortunes of the virtuous; and he but faintly can appreciate the pleasures of life, who neither participates in the woes of others, or whose heart is hardened against the misfortunes of his friend.

"To resume my story, now growing towards its greatest interest. When I was permitted to resume the management of my affairs, I found four letters from my bankers, mentioning my account being overdrawn by several thousands of pounds. Aware that I could always replace the same at a moment, I heeded not the intelligence half so much as I did the cause of this lavish expenditure. To me my son had never written since his scandalous alliance with that shameless woman: I knew not where he was, and I hardly knew how to find him. It occurred to me that by stopping his income I should insure detection of his abode; and accordingly, having seen that he it was who had drawn such immense sums during so small a space of time, I wrote to my bankers, desiring them to inform Henry that I saw no longer any occasion for such an income as he had appropriated to his use, and that I should stop every supply until he returned to me. This letter sealed his fate. But it is requisite that I retrace my steps, in order to make you master of the subject.

"When my son first accomplished his design, he retired to Versailles with the sister of his most intimate friend; but, knowing that I should take such steps as to force him to return to his wife, he that day drew a check for the amount of four thousand pounds. On receiving it, the bankers wrote me a letter, mentioning the largeness of the sum. This letter arrived the very

day that I was torn from the dying bed of my daughter, and it remained unopened until the expiration of the six months above mentioned,—the bankers in the mean time having paid it. Shakspeare says,

> 'Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds,
> Or bends with the remover to remove;'

and I have never found that great man to be in error. The love so suddenly transferred to Louisa was not destined to be of very long duration. Even now he should have controlled his feelings more than in marriage, for he had ruined this second object of his heart for ever; and the only resource she could hope for, by which her own wounded pride might be partially relieved, was in his unalterable affection and kindness towards her. This I say—this reflection should have occupied his thoughts, for he had the power of applying an antidote to the worst of poisons. It is no trifling act for a woman to do, to leave her friends, her parents, her sisters, her reputation, her *name*, and all for love. The man who consents to this wholesale ruin is doubly bound to be true to her, or to shelter her; and he who, having deprived the casket of the jewel which was within it, leaves the casket to the world's scorn and obloquy, is such a villain that no pencil can portray, or I describe—the female world will excuse any sin but this. Even the charms of beauty with which Louisa had been cursed were not sufficiently powerful to enchain the affections of Henry; for he became ashamed of himself, and heartily disgusted with his own conduct. The papers had conveyed to him the intelligence of the death of his wife; and as his heart still beat with existence, a little remorse mingled itself in the cup of pleasure, of which already he had drunk to intoxication and satiety. With her he mastered his feelings; but with the return to sobriety came the wish for the greater excitement of gambling. As the family of the Stanhopes still remained in Paris, he felt very insecure in his operations there, for the young gentleman who initiated him hung round the table like a fly to carrion; and Henry, fearful—for guilt is always timid—of detection, removed his victim to Spa, a place which at that time was filled by fashionable idlers, inexorable swindlers, and determined gamblers. There he occupied rooms in the Hotel de Flandre, certainly the best in the place: the lady took his name, and they were received as man and wife. Here it was that the first recrimination occurred between them, and it arose from

hope being suddenly blighted. Louisa Stanhope, who, when she first absconded from her home, was often heard to say,

'Not Cæsar's Empress would I deign to prove:
No! make me *mistress* to the man I love.'

Yet now that the obstacle to their legal union was removed, she felt that the performance of that duty would most materially tend to soften her feelings, and would in some measure restore her to the path from which she had swerved. The common people say, it is 'making an honest woman;' but, honest or not, she felt that she usurped a name which did not belong to her, and that Henry, who had ten thousand times declared that in the event of his wife's death he would marry her, would likewise experience some pleasure in the fulfilment of his word. But Henry had become a villain, and even now would rather have shaken off the burthen which he felt encumbered him. Still she loved as few women ever loved; his voice was to her sweet music, his smile was a rapture; and when he fixed his eyes on hers, she was like the bird fascinated by the snake.

"'Henry, dearest Henry,' she said one morning as the bell of the Catholic church, close to the hotel, swung its deep tones over the valley of Spa, 'that bell might remind you of a promise you have as yet failed to fulfil, but which I know I have only to mention, and you will gratify my not unreasonable or unjust request. You remember, dearest,' she said, as she laid her open hand upon his shoulder,—'you remember that under the promise of a future marriage I consented to forfeit my own and the world's esteem. How I have felt this none could tell; but now I feel that by being placed in the proper position of your wife, I should be more happy and contented, than as a walking falsehood, one who calls herself what she is not, and who adds to her former crimes by imposing wilfully on others. It is true that the year which is generally spent in mourning has not yet elapsed: but our union can be private; and, as you have long since laid aside the crape and the gloves of outward show, you can easily overcome the fashionable feeling, in the good and honourable action you would perform.'

"'Ay?' replied Henry.

"Struck a little by the insufferable coolness, she again repeated the proposition; when the unfeeling fellow replied,

"'Nonsense, my dear, nonsense! how can you be married at this place? It is true there is a church in Vauxhall; but

there is no bishop for a licence, and no priest to perform the ceremony. Perhaps you wish me to turn Catholic, and get wedded in that outlandish-looking place opposite? Be patient, my dear.'

"'Patient, Henry, I have been, and still must be. There, don't look so displeased, and I will not remind you of it again *here*. But if you knew how conscience *sometimes* awakes the slumbering virtue which still remains in me—if you did but know the satisfaction I should experience by my release from my present degradation, you would be the first to lighten the burden I bear, and to restore me to cheerfulness and to myself. Thank Heaven, we are taught that repentance, though late, may be acceptable; and I am fully aware how seriously I have injured my parents and my family by the fatal step I took, and in which I am now persevering.'

"'I think, my dear,' replied Henry, 'you had better volunteer to preach next Sunday: you would make out a capital case, as the lawyers say. There, don't bother me now; for I am sadly out of humour by the eternal run of ill-luck which seems to follow me wherever I go.'

"'And if you could but make home your residence, that annoyance would cease, and you be happy.'

"'Never, he replied; 'that is gone for ever: and so, like Goldsmith, "I must make that happiness I cannot find."'

"'But why night after night pursue the same fatal occupation? Already have you lost two thousand pounds, and our expenses here are daily augmenting: cannot you wean yourself from that which only occasions hours of uneasiness, sleepless nights, and ruined health?'

"'I wish most sincerely I could,' replied my son, looking significantly at Louisa; 'I confess I should be happier if I could divest my mind and myself from *their incumbrances*.' Saying which, he turned round and walked out of the room.

"It is a duty I owe Louisa, to confess she was a woman very far above the common run of the sex. To a mind naturally strong, but unfortunately with a wrong bias, she joined a sweetness of disposition, a patience under sufferings, a calmness in danger, and a courage in adversity, which would make a hero in a man; but she was a woman still, and she felt the neglect, the cutting allusion, the cool disregard, most poignantly. It appears that her family had traced her, and had written to her, offering again to receive her; and although she tore the letter into the smallest pieces, and more fervently kissed a small miniature of

Henry, yet she could not help contrasting the difference between the kind and affectionate letter of those she had deceived, and the harsh, unmanly, unwarrantable language in him who had deceived her: for very plainly she saw that her marriage was not likely to take place for months, if at all; and that she, like all other women who have swerved from virtue, found herself tolerated rather than beloved. With a resignation worthy of a better cause, she resolved to wait the result of time; and, after retiring to her room, and weeping away the first feeling of displeasure, she again occupied her saloon in all the grandeur of solitude, and there worked and worked until the hour of midnight, when my son returned.

"The diabolical scowl upon his countenance checked the utterance of a welcome which was already upon Louisa's lips. He threw his hat aside, and throwing himself upon the sofa, gave vent to his feelings in cursings and execrations both loud and deep. He had lost, and lost heavily,—indeed, so much as to distress him for present purposes; and thus the conversation which followed was not likely to be conducive to peace of mind to Louisa, or restoration of temper to himself.

"'I have kept some tea for you, Henry, my love,' said the affectionate girl, 'and I would not go to bed until you returned, in order that I might see you had it properly made.'

"'I had rather be without it,' he replied, surlily; 'for although I believe myself to be as arrant a villain as ever lived, yet I do not like to take that for which I cannot pay.'

"Louisa smiled and looked at him.

"'You smile, do you, little fool! but it is no time for that now. I have lost every farthing I have in the world;—I most solemnly declare, that if the crown of the greatest country in Europe were mine if I could produce one napoleon, most religiously do I aver that I have not the wealth required to purchase it.'

"'Well,' replied Louisa, 'then I would soon see the crown on Henry's head. Take my jewels, those you so liberally gave me; and though I do not part with the smallest trifle you ever offered me without regret, yet now, if there is a necessity for the sacrifice, take them all. And here is my watch, and all but this ring, this dear ring; with this I cannot part until poverty forces us from our roof, or Henry is unfaithful.'

"'There, there, Louisa, do not make such a long speech about nothing: the jewels will be useful for the present; but

as to the watch, you can keep it—but for how long is a matter of doubt.'

"'Be careful, dearest, how you dispose of them, or the report will be over this little place in a moment.'

"'Thank you, *madam*, for your advice. I dare say you think me such a precious fool as to stand at the hotel-door like a Jew pedler, asking the passers-by to purchase my wares. Go to bed, do: whenever women talk of any thing but embroidery or bonnets, they invariably talk nonsense. I shall go to Brussels to-morrow alone. You will remain here: and, by way of blinding the most acute, you will make up the party of which you have often talked, to the waterfall of Coo. Spare no reasonable expense: I will remit you some money from Brussels, and there I shall again draw upon my father to some large amount. Perhaps I may be obliged to go over to England; but I hope you have confidence enough in me to know that under any circumstances I will never desert you. However, we will talk over this to-morrow.'

"That morrow came. In vain Louisa endeavoured to reconcile the parting, even for a day or two, to herself. She felt that she was lost to the world, an outcast from society; and she knew that the instant the bubble report that she was Henry's wife burst, then she might seek some retreat farther from England, and endeavour to linger out her life in solitude and prayer. There was a heart-rending scene at parting. On the part of my son, he seemed more wrapped up in himself, his plans, and his determination to obtain money from me. He regarded his mistress as a log of impediment not easily removed. It was at that moment his intention to have left her for ever, and her quick perception discovered it; but she did not tax him with the thought,—she merely implored him to consider what she had done for the love of him, how solely she depended upon his charity and his affection: and as the tears trickled down her beautiful face, she said, 'I could bear any calamity in life but being separated from you. Oh, Henry, if you could only imagine the dreary hours of expectation which I must while away—if you could only feel the loneliness which now I feel, you would not thus leave me, when my presence could not impede your plans! To your honour I have ceded my own; on that honour I know I can with confidence trust; and as you object to my accompanying you, go, and may Heaven restore you to me shortly! My prayers, if a sinner's offering can be acceptable, shall be for you; and happy beyond all expression of happiness will the hour be that sees you return to me.'"

CHAPTER IV.

The old gentleman seemed to have recovered his elasticity of spirits from the infusion of some of mine, and he proceeded with his story. The following is the account of that party to Coo, which the old gentleman related to Robert the following morning.

"The waterfall of Coo is about nine miles distant from Spa, and requires a little patience and perseverance, a strong carriage and rather fat sides, to accomplish the distance without either a fracture of a bone or a break-down of the vehicle. Although in the actual vicinity of this once celebrated and now almost deserted watering-place the inhabitants have done much to attract the stranger by cutting winding paths through the thick trees which encircle the hills; and although they have two Vauxhalls, and a Redouté, in the latter of which is the gambling and the ball-room, the theatre and a restaurant; yet have they omitted to remember that men are not sheep to be cooped up in a pen and never to wander out of it. Spa may be seen at a glance, and two long walks will show all that civilisation has done for the sickly and the idle; it is without any exception the dullest abode that ever I remember to have selected in all the years of my wandering life.

"According to all previous plans for a visit to this waterfall, it was settled to dine there; and as Louisa had been instructed to give an ample entertainment in order to blind suspicion, three men were sent forward early in the morning burthened with enough to poison a whole parish. Every mixture which ingenuity could twist into a resemblance to wine, with very good names burnt upon the corks, and very similar to champagne as far as seals, wax, bottles, and colour were concerned, was packed up and sent: whilst the principal actors,—all of whom, excepting the ladies, had plundered or been concerned in the plunder of Henry at the gaming-table,—now assisted to lighten his purse by emptying the various bottles and swallowing the numerous good things which the master of the Hôtel de Flandre had selected.

"The party set forward about ten in the morning, and soon left the regular ride which leads to the three spas in the vicinity of the town, to strike into an open country on which the hand

of agriculture has never been concerned. Over these hills, which command a fine and extensive view, the party proceeded, enlivened occasionally by the bright sallies of wit of one of the party, and roused into merriment from the incessant dullness of another: in fact, one was the butt, one was the target, at which the sharp arrows of ridicule were directed,—and certainly they never fell thicker or more poisoned than on that day. In vain, however, Louisa endeavoured to hold up the head of cheerfulness; she knew she was surrounded by those whose exuberance of spirits arose from the cause of her depression, and she looked at them with the eye of undisguised distrust. To the ladies she was particularly attentive, although she thought a kind of distance was observed which previous to the beginning of the party of pleasure was never practised, and she very shortly accounted in her own mind for the change.

"She had observed a young man of my son's acquaintance, who enjoyed all the luxury of mustachios, and who never belonged to the army, horse or foot, buzzing about from lady to lady, and in low accents communicating something which seemed to attract particular attention. Louisa's quick eyes soon discovered that she was the object of observation, and it required not the scrutiny of a clever woman to remark that the frequent glances of the ladies were not exactly of that tender sort amounting to pity; in fact, they conveyed an idea of disdain. She needed not to probe her heart to find a reason, yet she well knew that she was herself unknown to the mischief-making swindler, who had almost invited himself to the party, and who now occupied his whole time and ingenuity in making it a failure. The ladies, as opportunities occurred, whispered to each other; some smiled at the intelligence, but others allowed their pretty faces to be clouded by suspicion. The party was thus spoiled almost before it began; and certainly, from what did transpire, it was evident that had not curiosity overcome propriety, one half would have returned home without ever reaching the waterfall. With the practised manner of a woman of the world, Louisa pretended not to heed either the whispers or the looks of her company; but summoning a false cheerfulness she attracted the notice of the hairy-lipped whisperer, and soon enticed him to ride near her; when she observed suddenly, 'that she felt it as a bad compliment that his discourse should have been directed to all of the party to the exclusion of herself, and begged that she might be made a partaker of his wit and his

news.' To this he responded quickly, by asking 'if she was ever in Paris?'

"Had a thunderbolt fell at her side, it could not have changed her features more. Unprepared for the question, which in itself was nothing, but in the manner of asking the secret, as she imagined only of her own heart, her quickness of mind was not sufficient to hasten the flow of blood to her face, which remained as pale as the figure of death on horseback. This did not escape either the questioner or the listeners, and, whatever might have been their suspicions they were evidently confirmed. She rallied, however, and replied in the affirmative; when the itinerant vender of scandal rode close to her side, and leaning familiarly towards her horse, fixing his eyes upon his victim, he said in a low voice quite inaudible to the rest, 'You were *married* in Paris, I believe?'

"Although the young gentleman thought the peculiar stress he had put upon the word *married* would have elicited something confirmatory of his suspicions, he was this time balked; for Louisa, aware of what he might have said, and seeing that the ladies were well within hearing, said out loud, 'Yes, I *was* married in Paris; and I suppose you have been whispering to your friends that I am a bride. This is ungenerous, Mr. Cavendish, (for that was the name of the mustachioed monkey,) thus to draw the eyes of the party on me when I had so well concealed it myself. But, as they say the eye of a king or a bride is fortunate, I hope my glance will render you more lucky in your next whisper.

"Even her own sex were deceived: she uttered the words coolly and collectedly, and in the last few syllables conveyed a cut which even the brazen audacity of this puppy could not withstand. Whilst this was enacting on one side, the cavalcade on the other were convulsed with laughter: but Louisa felt that a blow had been given to her respectability, that sooner or later the bubble would burst, and she be unmasked; and whilst lost in the dreary abode of her own heart, she gave way to the workings of a wounded spirit, and the wit of the one or the remark of another fell without effect upon her ear. From this she was roused by Mr. Cavendish again saying that he thought my son would be longer absent from his *wife* than she thought.

"Alarmed by the mysterious manner of the communication, Louisa imagined ten thousand perfidies on the part of Harry. Her first idea was that he had betrayed her to this wretch who had won his money, and perhaps declared his intention of never

returning to her. In this case all the horrors of her situation presented themselves in quick succession, with an accumulated account at the hotel, a daily increase of it, a reputation whispered away, without a friend in whom to confide, and without money either to redeem herself or reclaim her lover. She felt abused to the lowest grade, and was on the point of committing herself to Mr. Cavendish, and by endeavouring to extract the secret from him, confirm his suspicion. In this, however, she fortunately stumbled at the first attempt; and without any further remark calculated either to restore or excite her usual elasticity of humour, the first view of the waterfall, as they rounded a high and wooded hill, broke upon their sight. The horses were put to their speed, and in a manner more becoming the levity of fourteen than the staid restraint of married females, the whole party aspired to reach the wooden bridge, and stopped their horses close to the waterfall, fearing to attempt the passage of that apparently fragile and dangerous pass.

"No sooner had the party alighted, than a cloud of beggars, each carrying a dog in his arms, interrupted any remarks which might have escaped. Even Cavendish, as he helped Louisa from her horse, and uttered something in a low hurried tone, stopped short as the clatter of tongues broke loose in supplication for charity. No determination to be uncharitable stopped either their importunities or their solicitations: at last, finding that for the love of Heaven no money was bestowed, they changed their mode and urged charity on behalf of their dogs, which they agreed to throw over the foaming fall, in order to show Christians that death would not follow, although a leg or so might be broken in the descent. The ladies turned their heads away, disgusted at the cruel offer, and mendicity received a greater check from that society than from the one in Red Lion Square; for women are ever averse to cruelty, at least by nature they are so: some indeed break down the barrier planted for the comfort of their hearts, and seem eager to show their dexterity in skinning cats or eels alive, or crimping the half-expiring fish. That this mode of obtaining money is common, those who visit that twelve-feet fall of water dignified by the name of cascade, may any day satisfy themselves. Those dogs are preferred which have already grown wise by the constant fracture of their legs: the numerous whirlpools twist the half-drowned brute in rapid circles, whilst the barbarians on the bridge encourage the animal by shouts and cries to persevere to the landing-place. If the animal is thrown exactly in the centre of the

fall, he may escape unhurt; but if it is carelessly dropped the least on either side, the sharp-pointed rocks catch the poor devoted creature, the life of which is sacrificed for ten sous, and thus with fractured limbs it either survives to reach once more its cruel owners, or is carried beyond their barbarous reach, and expires in the quick river below.

"In these parties of pleasure the principal gainers are the priest and his beggars; his house, which stands a little distance from the bridge, is the only one in the parish which is blessed with a shed, under which the horses are placed to be turned half mad by the unrelenting flies. A kind of shudder at the proposition relative to the dogs had kept the ladies quiet, until they arrived at the house of the padre; the first remark being made by one of the ladies, that the parish must be larger than met the eye, for the number on the door was 666.

"'The number of the beast,' replied Mr. Cavendish, quickly, 'and I take it for granted we shall find the prophecy fulfilled.' Scarcely had he spoken these words, when a short, thin, unshorn, unshaved little follower of divinity appeared: he ushered the party into his miserable abode, which contained no apparent comforts, but which certainly afforded reason to surmise how his reverence got rid of himself and his thoughts. Dozens of empty bottles were standing in various parts of this room; whilst, protected by lock and key, but visible to the eye, stood the *spiritual* tempter, who, if the breath can confirm suspicion, the little padre had attempted to convert. The room was insufferably close, and dining there was out of the question; so the party, under the direction of Mr. Cavendish, agreed to dine in a shed belonging to a cow, the property of the padre; and, after various attempts at one Herculean labour, the table was spread on a smooth lawn, which formed the bank of the river just below the fall. And here, surrounded by the high mountains, which spread a long shade over the valley in front, and within hearing of the waterfall, the party sat down to the repast; but, as they occupied the grounds of the padre, and as his presence was actually necessary to keep his pauper parish from breaking through the thin defence of his domains, he was invited, and became one of the number.

"It was astonishing the power he held over his subjects, for when the savoury viands were spread, and when there appeared sufficient to have satisfied the clamorous mouths of the fifty or sixty who stretched their eager necks over the palings, the excited feelings of the paupers alarmed the party in regard to the

security of their goods; but directly the padre held up his finger, and uttered two words, the whole mob crossed themselves, and sat down on a small rising ground watching their prey. It might have reminded one of the greedy Cossacks of Platof, who, during the retreat of the French army from Moscow, perched themselves upon the heights which surrounded their victims, and dashed upon every straggler from those unfortunate but heroic battalions.

"That the party was a failure, was evident enough: and, in spite of the quickness of Mr. Cavendish, the folly of Mr. Henderson, or the peculiarity of the padre, a gloom had settled itself upon the ladies. In vain Louisa endeavoured to arouse them and herself; her words were coldly received, and at every glance of Mr. Cavendish, who seemed by his manner of behaviour to know she was within his grasp, her efforts grew gradually weaker and weaker, and ultimately entirely failed. The business of eating being finished, the ladies retired to stroll by the side of this lovely river; and, instead of forming a kind of mass without regularity, each seemed anxious to secure the arm of her friend, and Louisa was left to walk by herself. It was then the full force of her situation occurred to her; she saw it all, it needed no conjuror to drop the scales from her eyes. She was unmasked; or, what was as bad, suspected. She sat down by that babbling stream, as if to seek consolation in its noise, or wishing that the loud voice of conscience—for hers was not that small still voice, it was trumpet-tongued—might be drowned in the mass of water which roared over the cleft hill. She turned in her mind the conduct to be pursued; the party had wandered some little distance, and had intimated their hostility by sitting down beyond the reach of her voice. That Cavendish was in possession of the secret, she could not doubt: either he had seen her when her character was sacred in some of the gay balls of the French metropolis, and had heard of her elopement with one who had never changed her name; or, in the riot of debauchery, when the sentinel of discretion is drunk, her,—she could not say husband, her, she trembled when she uttered *protector*,—had betrayed the secret. There she sat a Niobe in tears, the loveliest of those by whom she was deserted; a creature formed for admiration, for desire, for society; and now almost visibly a despised, an insulted wanton.

"To face the storm, she found herself unable; to dissimulate, she was incapable; to force herself upon her company, she had too high a spirit. Fallen as she was, and in her own estima-

tion irrevocably ruined, and utterly despised as she felt, still the spirit of her birth was not quelled; and, in the emergency of the case, she decided upon resenting the injury she had sustained in the evident estrangement of her society. Long, long she pondered upon her dreadful situation: even hope that Henry would perform the last act of justice towards her, failed to support her flagging spirits; but revenge for the insult her own sex had heaped upon her, by the whisperings of so insignificant a creature as Mr. Cavendish, armed her afresh for the combat, and infused a spirit which only revenge in an insulted woman could infuse.

"In the mean time the gentlemen were very busy in rendering the padre a subject for ridicule by his own parishioners; the little man, who at first was shy and reserved, seemed to gain confidence when the ladies left the table; from abstinence he swerved towards the bottle, and began, one would have supposed, to lay in a stock for a fortnight. Soon it operated, and soon began to appear one of the most disgusting sights with which men can be afflicted. To see the man who on the Sabbath pours into the ears of his congregation the glad tidings of salvation, to see him who preaches the necessity of virtue, and who is eloquent in exhorting his congregation to be sober and diligent, give the lie to his own words in the house of God, by basely profaning his character by drunkenness, is horrible; to drown the light of reason, to hush the eloquent voice, to obliterate memory even of himself and his Maker, are crimes doubly aggravated when the hypocrite dares in the church to point out that way which he is weak enough to refuse to follow himself. To wine succeeded brandy: that dirty abomination, snuff, choked his utterance; his eyes seemed on fire; and even decency was forgotten when this little spectre of divinity, this shadow of a churchman, gave way to his political opinions, and sung songs of revolution and of riot within the hearing of his parishioners. Then came all the devil of his composition, 'the love of money.' One of the party, authorised by Louisa to pay his demand, which could hardly have amounted to three francs, was astonished to find the intoxicated padre a cheat as well as a drunkard; he required thirty francs; and so infuriated did he become at the hints that his charges were exorbitant, that he nearly added insult to injury, and threatened to detain the glasses, &c. until he was compensated. It was paid; and no sooner had he counted the money, than, reeling from the shed, he called his hungry paupers, and pointing out the food still left, gave them

permission to enter his grounds. Then came a visitation of real harpies; in vain the *commissionaires* belonging to the hotel opposed this irruption of the enemy; they broke through the slender defence, seized and bore off their plunder in spite of the words and the blows of the servants; the padre staggered home, and, throwing himself upon his head, left the company to depart.

"It was now nearly eight o'clock; the day had been intensely hot, and Louisa, overcome by the heat and her situation, felt the first cooling breeze which started from the adjacent hills. She lifted her eyes towards the point from which the wind came, and then first observed the party mounted and riding homewards. She started up, and gathering the folds of her habit, hastened to her horse; all were gone but two, one her own, and one belonging to Cavendish: by this time the cavalcade had turned the corner, and were out of sight. All her feelings of revenge were hushed in the critical situation in which she found herself; to start alone was impossible. Cavendish was nowhere to be found, the servants were busy in defending their master's property, and the ragged children left to pick up the offerings of drunken liberality, remained by the two horses; they were too weak to assist her, and the horses too riotous to mount without aid. She looked round for her worst foe, he was not visible; but her eye caught at a distant turn of the road her party at a full gallop, and she distinctly saw some of the ladies look behind, as if fearful of her approach. She now began to weigh in her mind if this could be a premeditated scheme; but even this insulted creature could not credit that her sex would so desert her without some further proof than that adduced by this stranger to her.

"To avoid the importunities of the beggars, she betook herself to the priest's parlour, which opened into his bed-chamber: there lay and snored in drunken forgetfulness that hypocritical preacher; a man endowed with various talents, with an eloquence hardly rivalled, with knowledge deep and profound; a victim to that passion he could not control, a living lie upon his own advice, a man who pointed out the forbidden fruit, and who was the first to pluck it. She shut the door, and sat down: how often, how very often she looked at the watch, the only remnant, besides a ring she was not privileged to wear, left by her seducer! Even as she marked, the hours slipped rapidly away; her thoughts wandered after him she loved; and in the pleasure derived in retracing scenes of affection, the time cheat-

ed her in its flight, and the shades of evening, now casting the lengthened shadow over the village, recalled her to her situation. The horses still remained, held by an old man; the servant from Spa had gathered up the remnants of the feast rescued from the beggars; the crowd had, being satiated with plunder, retired; and Louisa heard only the distant lowing of the cattle, and now and then the hasty pawing of the horses.

"The evening growing towards night, was still and calm: she remembered that it would require two hours by daylight, even at a good speed, to reach Spa; that there was no moon; and that even now, if she mounted, it would be midnight before she could reach her hotel. Then came the apprehension that her character, soon to be talked away by the female babblers, would not be exalted by a dark ride through a strange country, over hills, where houses did not exist, where the road was difficult to find by broad daylight, and where it was actually dangerous to cross, from the numerous pitfalls and inequalities. The wide romantic scene the noon-day's sun had rendered magnificent, was now an object of terror. The shades of night were fast approaching; the servant of the padre eyed her with suspicion; and when she found that the officious menial would insist upon calling the padre, she took the desperate resolution of mounting by any means, and endeavouring by the sagacity of the horse to find her way home. She succeeded; and had crossed the bridge before mentioned, and on the smooth road was urging her horse forward, when the clattering of Cavendish's horse convinced her that he had carefully concealed himself in order to insure his prey. The road, which is good near the village of Coo, soon becomes rocky, ill-formed, and shaded by continual nut-trees. These thick-foliaged plants would even by moonlight have rendered the ride hazardous; but now, with a darkness which Louisa thought more intense than natural, it became positively requisite to allow the animals to walk their own pace, and pick their own way.

"'Your most obedient servant, Louisa Stanhope,' began Cavendish, as he forced his horse close to her side. 'I thought we should have an hour's quiet conversation, and I see you are equally disposed, or we should not be here this dark night.'

"Louisa, at once convinced that all was known, remained silent.

"'Come, come, my truant bird, we must be better acquainted; as yet you only know me as it were by accident; but the time is come when you must regard me with a more friendly

eye, for I have news to tell you with which you are unacquainted. I know that marriage-ring, which you so cautiously exhibit, has no right upon that finger, and that—'

"'For Heaven's sake! Mr. Cavendish,' interrupted Louisa, 'stop! I am not able to bear this insult; and I wonder that you, who call yourself a man, should have selected this moment, when an unprotected female should be sacred in your eyes, to insult and revile her.'

"'I neither insult nor revile you,' continued Cavendish; 'if that precious bauble virtue, which you have thrown from your casket, was still in your keeping, I would not speak as I intend to do; but you are the world's property now, your own sex forsake you, and you may seek consolation amongst those who neither boast of virtue nor propriety, or throw yourself into the arms of any man who is kind enough to outstretch them for your protection.'

"Cavendish, although a young man, was a most consummate villain in his heart: it appears that he had oftentimes seen Louisa, and had been equally anxious to inquire her history; on the Continent this is more common than in a casual meeting in our own country. He himself was handsome, of a manly figure, a commanding countenance; but with an eye that, when fixed by another, wavered and uncovered his heart,—the eye is the index of that. It is said, no animal can face the steady glance of the courageous, virtüous human eye; and Louisa knew that although she had an enemy by her side, she had a coward for her foe. Cavendish had, during his many gambling transactions with Henry, by little and little extracted her history; and the night previous to his departure, when the last turn of fortune decided in favour of Cavendish, and when he, in the cowardly exultation over his fleeced friend, recommended him, as it was late, to go to bed with his pretty wife, and forget such a trifling loss, Henry, in a moment of spleen exclaimed, 'She is not my wife, thank God! and I can be rid of her and the incumbrance to-morrow.' Startled at this, Cavendish continued the question, when the half-inebriated gambler proclaimed her as 'Louisa Stanhope,' the victim of his successful seduction.

"The party at Coo coming immediately upon this discovery, the sudden departure of Harry, and the knowledge of his severe losses, determined Cavendish to effect his purpose. Cunning to a word, clever by nature, and calm and collected, he considered her honour now in his hands, and immediately determined to unmask her before the company, to estrange the females from

Louisa; and although he never imagined that fortune would throw her so soon in his power, yet he actually had planned, had laid the very trap into which the unsuspecting Louisa had fallen. He had persuaded the party to decamp, and had promised one over-zealous lady to keep Louisa in the rear, so that her pious ears might not be profaned by hearing even the sound of her fallen sister's voice.

"In every wo, with the exception of this one, to which in this miserable life we are subjected, the female breast participates in the misery of the sufferer; the heart which would bleed over the misfortune of unexpected losses, the death of friends or relations, or could compassionate the minor evils of our existence, stands unmoved to the cry of pity from an abandoned female. Instead of providing for their wants, and winning them back to the path from which they have swerved, they spurn them to degradation, and force them to continue, by the exclusion they practise, in that road of ruin, until their healths are impaired, their spirits broken, their hearts hardened, and their guilt confirmed. In vain they lift the supplicating voice; they are discarded as worthless, and reviled as strumpets.

"The gamester and the drunkard, are they not as bad as the profligate woman? Does not the former not only bring misery on himself, but on all those dependent upon him? Does not he fly from one excitement, if possible, to a worse? Is not his means of subsistence the plunder of others? Is he not vicious, low, degraded, oftentimes a forger, and mostly a swindler?

"Who can rely upon the drunkard? Is he fit to undertake any service? Will he not squander his own and the wealth of others to drive himself into forgetfulness? Is the house in which he sleeps secure from fire? or in the seaman, is the ship safe from explosion? How many lives may he not sacrifice by his intemperance; and yet we neither hold the gambler as an exile from society, nor the drunkard from the warmth of our fires. We compassionate their errors, we pity their infirmities; but we admit them in our company, and oftentimes enrol them as our friends. Let those beware of such acquaintances who follow the steps of a Cavendish, or the ruin of a Harry."

CHAPTER V.

"It was Cavendish's idea that by suddenly convincing Louisa of her secret, beating her down to the lowest despair, and then slowly proposing in kind terms a remedy, that he might succeed in turning her affections from Harry and gain them for himself; not that he had the slightest idea of protecting her afterwards, he was not generous enough in his disposition to shelter the woman he had ruined; sufficient was it for him to have her in his power, to rob the girl of the little peace of mind which remained, and then to allow her to find a refuge where and how she could.

"Some small distance beyond the village of Coo the road again becomes comparatively good, and in this part Louisa advanced at a safe canter; she was anxious to near her home, but she forgot that each pace of the horse conveyed her further from any habitation; for, after winding through this straggle of huts and houses, the road leads over the before-mentioned hills, on the summit of one of which a solitary house still stands. Cavendish was close at her side: in vain she actually tried a gallop; his horse was the fleetest, besides which he was a bolder rider, and a man has a great advantage from his seat, especially when the road is bad, and the horse requires support. To evade him, to distance him, was impossible; and, had she succeeded, she never could have found the road, difficult by daylight, and almost hazardous in darkness. During the accelerated pace, Louisa had wound herself up to face the storm; and when they emerged from the lane, and began to ascend the hill, the horses seemed to know the necessity of a slower pace, and dwindled into a walk. Cavendish had wound his coward bosom to a resolution which in daylight he would have hesitated to have attempted. The flash of the woman's eyes were imperceptible: it was like a timid man writing a letter in his own sanctum, in which he dared to give vent to his feelings in the absence of his enemy; for many men will hector in security, and, when the eye is withdrawn, the heart may be re-assured.

"'Are you convinced, Louisa,' said Cavendish, 'that I know more than you suspected; and that, in spite of your calm asser-

tion this morning, know you to be, not the wife, but the mistress of Harry.'

"'You have asserted as much, Mr. Cavendish, and if true or not I shall not condescend to answer; but I cannot but regret that, independent of the insult offered to me, you should have whispered away my character, and thus left me under the protection of a man who has ruined my reputation, and who has driven away by his slanderous tongue those of my own sex who were my proper companions.'

"'*It is never a blot until it's hit*, as the backgammon players say: you were believed virtuous,—they liked you; you are found under false colours,—they desert, perhaps despise you.'

"'And pray, sir,' replied Louisa, 'by whose authority do you circulate these rumours.'

"'Harry's.'

"'Good God above! it cannot be; you are endeavouring in the absence of this man to insult his wife: never would I believe the basest of men could descend so low; it is false, utterly false; he never asserted what you assert, he never whispered what you have whispered.'

"'You women are remarkably foolish, my dear Louisa: let a little reason penetrate through the darkness even of this night; you must know that I was ignorant of this two days ago, or you would have seen more of me, rely upon it. It was when he resolved to leave you that he betrayed the secret; he has no more money, he is off, he has shaken the clog from his leg, your landlord will become clamorous for his bill yet unpaid: to-morrow will see you a different creature to the once courted, once *innocent* lady; his flight I have already circulated; his return I know improbable, if not impossible, and therefore, my pretty bird, caught in your own lure, I would recommend your turning your eyes upon one who has money enough to support you, and who, in compassion for your distress will shelter you.'

"The indignation of Louisa knew no bounds: attached, fondly attached to the man who had ruined her—perfectly incredulous as to the assertions of Cavendish, and yet knowing their truth, she knew not how to answer, for her wrath was kindled, her reason half estranged, and from the latter part of his speech she saw clearly his intentions and the increasing danger of her situation: still she was woman enough to temporise; and swallowing that anger which at first nearly choked her utterance, she rather calmly replied, 'When I am convinced of the truth of your assertions, Mr. Cavendish, I may be more

inclined to listen to your propositions; but I feel easy under that promise, knowing who and what I am. Next Saturday, Harry shall revenge the insult offered to his wife; and if I were his mistress, he would be under a double obligation to protect me from the ruffian assault of a stranger.'

"'I feel rather easy upon that point, Louisa: I tell you, for the last time, that he himself told me—yes, *me*—that you were not his wife, and that he would soon be clear of the incumbrance. Why, he likened you to a load, a burthen, a heavy disagreeable weight he had fixed upon his own shoulders, and from under which he was resolved to slip. I really wonder that you, so young, so beautiful, so full of life and animation, want the spirit of your sex to despise a man who has so cruelly deserted you.'

"'And one who has so cruelly traduced me!'

"'Nay, nay, my dear girl, be reasonable. I love you, and therefore feel a warm interest in your welfare; I love you, Louisa,—(saying which, he took her hand, which was resting on the pommel, and which she hastily withdrew,)—before we part this night, that hand will not be so savagely withdrawn: let me show you your situation, and you can best judge if I heighten the colouring of the picture. Harry is ruined, he has not a farthing: in the excitement of his loss, he has confessed himself happy—yes, child, happy—that he was not clogged by matrimony; and even in madness he had some reason, for he said a man was never thoroughly ruined until he *was* married: he rejoiced in publishing your shame; not only myself, but six other men were present: he held you up to public obloquy, public scorn; he confessed his bill unpaid at the hotel, and his inability to pay it; he spoke of your jewels as too good, too real, to adorn a mistress; and in the bitterness of his loss he derived comfort, not from your affection or your charms, but because he could cast you aside, like the loathsome weed carried by the Gulf stream, to float upon the public ocean until that ocean destroyed it. Where now are the feelings which warm the female heart? Have you no spirit, no courage, no scorn for such a worthless fellow; who, having plucked the ripe fruit, leaves it to rot on the ground? Nay, I will make you convinced that I speak the truth: no sooner had he mentioned your *proper* name, than one of the party remembered you at Paris, recollected you as Louisa Stanhope; nay, he had seen the whole account of your elopement in the papers.'

"A long deep sigh escaped Louisa. At this moment, when

in all its naked truth, the story was told, her feelings were beyond description; she saw at once the probability of his desertion, but the jewels too pure to grace a wanton's neck, stung her to the very heart: in vain she endeavoured to mask his behaviour; the whole was too connected, not one link in the chain was wanting. Then did she feel the devil rising in her bosom, and overawing the guilt that rankled therein; she could not discredit that which she knew to be true, and which could only have been known by the mean babbling of her lover's tongue.

"'Rather exult than sigh,' continued Cavendish, 'for that dark cloud which threatens us with its thunder is not more charged with danger than is your situation: to-morrow you will be an outcast; this late ride with one scarcely known to you, the grief to which you will give vent, the shame which you must feel, and cannot conceal, will all tend to confirm the truth, and to place me in public estimation as your protector. If this cloud burst over us, and swell the fords near the road, we may be detained until daylight; and what then will be the surmise when, with jaded horses, bespattered habit, weeping eyes, you creep into your room and find your officious maid ready to note every spot or stain? Reflect well upon this, and remember it is but the overture to the serious opera, which the whole scandal will develope. Again, Louisa, I love you; I offer you my house, my home, my fortune: and had I not been so overpowered by your beauty as to confess myself your admirer, I had not planned this meeting, and which fortune has so kindly afforded me.'

"'And to this meeting then I am indebted for my ruin. If, Mr. Cavendish, that cloud to which you have alluded were to arm me with all the terrors of its lightning, on your head should fall the bolt: hear this from one who through life has only told one falsehood; I hate you, despise you, and would rather fall a prey to the midnight ruffian, than yield to one to whom I am indebted for all the misfortunes I feel about to crush me.'

"'Not so, Louisa.'

"'Sir, I beg that freedom may be discontinued. I place myself under your protection, but our acquaintance ceases the moment of our arrival; your well-told story of dirt and marks, my innocence—the plain unvarnished tale—will shield me from; and now, even now, you are willing to add another falsehood to your declaration of love. Did you not swindle Harry of his money? Did you not receive that which has ruined us? Have you not circulated those reports which life is too short to ob-

literate? Have you not driven Harry from my arms, and my sex from my society?'

"'You are rash, Louisa, dearest Louisa, in your expressions; you are now in my power, and I might avail myself of the hint so kindly given in the midnight ruffian. I have acted as a friend, I have shown you your danger, and I have offered you an escape:—keep your horse nearer mine, or you will be in a gravel-pit. Remember this,—that he who is branded as a swindler, as a liar, as a villain, may as well add *a cause* for another opprobrious term.'

"'You cannot mean to use violence, Mr. Cavendish; the very Heavens will protect the innocent. I cannot believe you even capable of such wickedness—such cowardice.'

"'Louisa, I have resolved that you shall love me: nay, regard me as your best friend: and not the thunder of the heavens shall turn me from my resolution. Consent then to relinquish the man who scorns you, and give me the hand which you have so lavishly bestowed upon a worthless villian.'

"'Unhand me, Mr. Cavendish, or my screams shall startle the neighbourhood: unhand me, sir, directly, and learn that respect which is due to a woman.'

"'By Heavens! I cannot part with you; scream if you will; even this solemn calm before the storm will not convey your screams to human ear. Here is a wild and rugged hill to which none repair but during daylight; no shepherd brings his flock to this ungenerous soil: and here, stop your horse;—here I will exact from you a promise to be mine, to forget the man who has so scandalously ill-used you, and to live with him who has ruined in order to secure you.'

"The shriek with which the poor girl screamed for assistance was re-echoed, in the stillness of the night, from hill to hill, as if to summon all to her aid: that loud piercing shrill voice was unheard. Cavendish, frightened from his purpose, relinquished her hand, and Louisa dashed her horse forward.

"Those who have resided at Spa are well aware how frequently, how almost instantaneously, the storms arise. Attracted by the many mountains in the vicinity, the clouds collect upon their summits, and require but the first flash of lightning to inundate the plains below. But on this night slowly had the clouds collected; by degrees they began to extend themselves; and the night, dark before, was perfectly black in the direction from which the impending storm was to come: it hung like a pall over the benighted travellers; and often did Louisa implore its

downfall, in order to scare the villain from his destined prey. Aloft, the wind was plainly audible; it seemed to follow the scream, as if any thing which disturbed the stillness would bring on the tempest. The horse, fearful of its footing, again relaxed into a walk, and moved its ears backwards and forwards as if catching the sound of the wind, which became louder and louder, although not a breath disturbed the lower atmosphere.

"Cavendish was again by her side, again eager to be heard; and now with soft and kind words endeavouring to persuade his victim to renounce her still loved Harry: but Louisa never deigned a reply; as he sank in solicitations, she rose in courage; she suspected him as a coward, and she hated, she despised him.

"'I see,' he resumed, 'it is all in vain. I had hoped that your knowledge of the dreadful predicament in which you stand, and my kind intentions, might have procured for me a more ready ear and a more generous auditor. Surely you cannot be blind to your situation; your forlorn, your helpless condition, prompts me again and again to offer my protection.'

"'Never, sir, never; as there is a God in heaven—never will I consent to such baseness!'

"'Then by that heaven your ruin is inevitable! To whom, dearest Louisa, can you turn? Where can the despised and degraded find a friend in affliction? Is it not evident that your own sex have abandoned you? And where, when the determined landlord presses his bill,—where can you find the means to satisfy his just demand? Look, therefore, to me as your protector; and your generosity shall be repaid by my undeviating affection.' Here Cavendish dismounted, and placing his hand through the bridle of Louisa's horse stopped it, and with the look of a lover again urged his suit in more respectful terms.

"'"Tis useless,' Cavendish continued, ''tis useless your refusal, Louisa: look well, first to your own state, then to mine; nay, do not be wilfully blind. You see in the abandonment of Harry only more affluence would accrue to you: he is ruined, he has not a farthing; nay, dearest girl, has he not insulted you beyond endurance, in stigmatising you as a wanton, on whose neck the emblem of innocence, the pearl of purity was contaminated? Has he not branded you with infamy?—and has he not, at the very moment when his assistance was most needed, deserted—left you at a public hotel, having previously published your dishonour? Come, come, I know it is hard to give up those we love, and I feel that truth now: but it amounts to mad-

ness in a woman to cling to the being who cast her from him, and who is so pitifully mean that he is not contented with having rifled the flower, but he must throw the stalk away.'

"Louisa sighed heavily; and Cavendish, aware that women do not sigh without a cause, took her hand as he walked by the side of her horse, allowing his own to follow at the bridle's length, and thus artfully continued,—'Excuse me, dearest girl, if in showing you your danger I have used words which ill accord with your wishes, or perhaps your belief; but it is a duty I owe to beauty,—and surely never was that duty more fairly commanded, if loveliness can command,—to shield it from insult. You think I have used you ill in severing your companions from you: I have done you a service if you will avail yourself of it; for now, as you know your danger, you can escape from it before even the female tongue can babble your disgrace. Poor dear helpless beauty, it is hard so young to be so sacrificed; and I should ill become the name of a man if I did not participate in your afflictions, and use my utmost endeavours to shelter and shield you.'

"At this moment, a vivid flash of lightning seemed to dart within an inch of the horses; the thunder followed in a loud terrific roar. Louisa's horse shied to the left, its hoof striking full upon the foot of Cavendish; and, turning sharp round fell into a pit, forcing Cavendish before it, and dismounting its rider: the other horse turned its head from the storm, whilst the clouds discharged their contents in such torrents that a second Deluge seemed at hand. Neither were much hurt, but the pain experienced from the hoof of the animal checked the mellifluous accent of Cavendish.

"Louisa availed herself of this sudden and unexpected delivery to deceive her unworthy companion. 'See, Mr. Cavendish, the Heavens on which I called have interposed to save me; and this, I hope, will lead you to think more of our mutual safety than of your present wishes? How are we ever to find our way in this dreadful night without we take advantage of the lightning, by which means we may discover the solitary house which stands not far from the summit of the hill? Let us mount our horses before the animals become more frightened, and perhaps, unable to stand the storm, may gallop away. I hope you are not hurt, sir?'

"Cavendish, recovering from his fall, was walking round and round, limping seriously, and muttering curses both loud and deep: to the question of Louisa he answered with a mild voice,

'Think not of me, dearest Louisa; if you are unhurt, I care not for this trivial pain: I grieve to say, that although I can walk, I can offer but little assistance in placing you on your saddle; but let me try;' and, saying this, he placed his hand covered with mud round the waist of Louisa. She released herself instantly, saying,

"'Then I must do the best to save myself;' and, taking the bridle, she led the horse to the beaten track, and finding a small hillock, she succeeded in leaping on her saddle, whilst Cavendish officiously endeavoured to be of some trivial service. He took her hand, and respectfully kissed it as he continued, 'I trust, Louisa, my respectful manner will convince you that you have not fallen into the hands of a ruffian. I hope you will see in me one whose admiration of you is founded in love; and who would willingly repair, if the love was mutual, the injury you have sustained at the hands of Harry. Before I mount my horse, and whilst the thunder may witness the promise, let me implore you to give me some hope that my affections are not misplaced, and that you will leave Spa to-morrow under the protection of the man who will traverse the world to seek the spot on which his dear Louisa may wish to reside; and he—' he continued, as he kissed her hand,—'he will not desert the woman who returns his love, or blazen her shame in the eyes of the curious world.'

"'Mr. Cavendish,' replied Louisa, 'you must admit my right to doubt all your assertions; but if what you have said of Harry's baseness is true, if he does not return to me before next Wednesday, I will become yours, if you discontinue your importunities now; and let this promise suffice for the present: although he has used me badly,—nay, I could find another word, —yet I would not desert him until he has cast me away. Now mount your horse, and let us liberate ourselves from our present difficulties.'

"Cavendish again kissed her hand, and thanking her for the prospect she afforded him of convincing her of his sincerity, he mounted his horse. His determination had been very different; but now he held the balance between the quiet possession on Wednesday, or the hazard of the consequences should he persevere. He was confident Harry would never return: and therefore, after binding Louisa by a promise the most sacred—nay, making her seal the contract by kissing him, they proceeded onwards, Cavendish holding the hand of Louisa, which she never attempted to withdraw: 'I know not, my dearest Louisa, what

is best to be done: this rain will render the fords impassable; and the roads, hazardous at all times, will now become dangerous. Shall we make for the lone house, and there wait until daylight?'

"'No, no,' replied Louisa, who was resolved not to trust herself longer with Cavendish than was actually necessary; 'we are drenched to the skin and covered with mud; the sooner we gain the hotel the better; and I would not for the world arrive by daylight. It is now only midnight, and we have passed the worst road; there stands the house; we must take the road to the left, and follow the lanes: we cannot now miss our way.'

"'You remember your promise, Louisa—start not at my again mentioning it—we are both bound by the same bond, I not to molest you now, and you to be mine on Wednesday. I told you, before the night was over this hand would not be withdrawn, and I am no false prophet.'

"'What I have said I have said,' replied Louisa.

"'Now then,' resumed Cavendish, 'let us endeavour to undo the mischief I have already done; to-morrow, or rather to-day, will bring forward your clamorous creditors; allow me to be your banker and pay all your bills—I will call about noon. We must now be upon terms of the strictest friendship; you must appear left under my protection, and I will endeavour to persuade your female friends that I was mistaken. Do not dine in public, but I will be your companion in your room.'

"'As you direct, so I shall do, Mr. Cavendish; but perhaps the landlord may not be clamorous, in which case I see no necessity of borrowing from your kindness.'

"'The greatest in the world, darling: your offer to pay your account will give the lie to my own whispers; your having money will insure you respect: and next Wednesday we will remove to Liege.'

"'If Harry does not return,' interrupted Louisa.

"'I fear your sincerity even now, Louisa. How can you cling to such a shadow? How can you still love the man who has ruined your reputation, left you a pauper, and who now is either half way to Paris or London?'

"'He left his wife, his own wife for me—nay, occasioned her death after being married only seven months,' sighed Louisa, 'and therefore would not hesitate in deserting me when a fresh object attracted his attention. Ah, Mr. Cavendish, it is the knowledge of this very fact I have mentioned, that he left his wife for me,—ay, and that it killed her,—that has bound me to him.'

"'Hah! hah! hah!' laughed Cavendish; 'what fools you women are! Why you confess it then, you acknowledge yourself his mistress!'

"'And have you not told me so yourself?' replied the astonished girl; 'have you not mentioned the circumstances so minutely that I could not be deceived?'

"'Good! by the Lord, good! He said so in a fit of spleen, but nobody believed him; and the story about the papers was my own invention.'

"Louisa withdrew her hand, and Cavendish instantly stopped the horse: the storm had passed, the calm had succeeded, and the moon had risen: he looked her in the face with the consciousness of power, and, seizing her again, said, 'Either your hand, or your *honour!*' She gave it trembling as it was; and Cavendish mistook for fear that which arose from scorn, or the sensation of touching a viper. Now the villain became a bold man, now he held her firmly in his power; the truth, which he certainly never believed before, was now confirmed, and his manner changed from the vacillating lover to the imperative master. Her story was easily to be confirmed; he had her firmly in the web, and his revenge was certain. He hated Harry for the word 'coward' which had been directed at him by his victim; he *had* taken his money, he *had* cheated him of that, and now he would rob him of his mistress."

CHAPTER VI.

"It was not before three o'clock on Thursday morning that Cavendish and his victim arrived at Spa. The busy hum of men was hushed in repose, and they alighted at the Hôtel de Flandre without being noticed; the man to whom the horses belonged was aroused by the tread of the animals, and, opening the great gates of the courtyard, admitted the tired and jaded creatures. Cavendish assisted Louisa to dismount, and would have saluted her on parting, had she not withdrawn herself; and without offering her hand, she coldly repeated, 'good night,' and retired to her own room. The maid startled at seeing her mistress in such a disordered state: her eyes seemed swollen from tears, her hair hung in long locks from which the moisture was still dropping—her riding-hat was indented in front, her habit was covered with mud, and, in the only place which might have defied the dirt, was the strong print of a hand. The other party, some of whom lived in the same hotel, had returned by ten o'clock; and it certainly did appear very strange to the strong intellect of the waiting and inquisitive servant, that all the ladies should have so suddenly deserted her mistress, and left her to the protection of a stranger on a dark night over a barren country. The many questions put to her mistress were answered in one answer, and unfortunately she blended a falsehood with the truth.

"'She had,' she replied, 'left the waterfall with the rest of the party; but in riding over the hill the horse had shied and she been thrown, and that a Mr. Cavendish, as she was rather hurt, had advised the rest to ride forward to avoid the impending storm, whilst he would remain and walk by her side until she reached home: the rain had so swollen the river that they could not pass, and thus she had been detained until this late hour.'

"'Why ma'am,' replied the inquisitive maid, 'you must have been thrown *after* the storm began, for the habit is covered with mud; and dear me, why here is the mark of a hand round your waist—I suppose you rode home.'

"Louisa saw the error she had committed, and her maid was

too quick not to perceive the change in her mistress's manner; as when those garments were removed, which we who relate the anecdote hardly know by name, no contusion was visible, no marks in black array confirmed the statement, no sore inflamed the skin, no blood oozed from any wound. She had walked up stairs firmly and well; and if she had been so injured as to be five hours behind her company in a distance of only nine miles in all, some mark would have been left to attest the truth, some expression of pain would have escaped, some liniment would have been offered, and some friction desired: but, instead of this, deep, deep sighs escaped her; her eyes streamed with tears, her whole manner was hurried and confused. 'I am afraid, ma'am,' continued the maid, 'you are very much hurt; can I get any thing for you to relieve the pain: is it your back, ma'am, or your arms.'

"'Never mind, Mary, I shall be better to-morrow; do leave me. I will put my hair in paper. You must be very tired; good night, and don't let any body disturb me in the morning. There go, that's a good creature, for I feel very tired, and cannot talk.' The servant retired.

"It was said by a great and good man, that every night, when he retired to rest, he passed before him every word he had uttered, every action he had committed, every sentence he had read; —thus he habituated himself to stand in judgment on his conduct: and whilst he censured the slightest levity, and prayed for forgiveness, he congratulated himself, and thus received his reward, for the good he had done, the learning he had acquired, the virtue he had practised, and the forgiveness he had extended. That this is a wholesome, useful watchfulness over ourselves is evident; and if repentance is the first step towards forgiveness, self-examination is the shield from crime.

"Sleep, that blessing 'which covereth a man all over like a blanket,' came not to cover the approaches of horror: conscience, the busy sentinel over virtue, searched in vain for its charge, and reproached its inattention by reminding the once proprietor of its loss. How changed was all around her!—no longer the fascinating Louisa would be the pride or the envy of her acquaintance, no longer would the world court her society: her own breast was her accuser, and her sighs, her tears, her own absent, distracted manner, would become the principal evidence against her. In vain she endeavoured to reassure herself; when people have once lost their own esteem, all the words and all the works of the world can never restore it. She turned,

and turned in her mind the proper course to be pursued; and finally resolved upon declaring herself too indisposed to quit her chamber, to exclude every one but her own maid, and to give the most positive orders that Mr. Cavendish should not be admitted. If Harry intended to return, twenty-four hours would not elapse without a letter: if not, she resolved to state her situation to her landlord; leave all her clothes, &c. in his care; borrow sufficient money to convey her to Paris; and, like the houseless stranger, beg admission at that door from which she had eloped, and which was now closed against her. With these determinations she became more quiet: she saw it was useless to cower at a danger from which she could not escape; and equally impolitic would it have been to have put on the face of assurance, when her female friends had united against her, and pretty plainly demonstrated the course they intended to pursue.

"Daylight dawned, the usual hour of rising came,—and noon appeared; her maid had obeyed her orders, and had devoted her morning to the laudable exercise of her inquisitorial talents. She had elicited from the *commissionaires* the certainty that her mistress did not leave the waterfall with the rest of the company, and she was not slow in observing that although she had met one or two of the ladies themselves, yet that no inquiries were made concerning her mistress, or of the injury she might have sustained by her fall. She knew that this was unusual in civilised society, and she very soon came to the conclusion that her mistress was no better than she ought to be. Mary was a rather hard-featured woman, of about four-and-twenty, and joined to a face none the better for the attack of small-pox, a violent irascibility of temper, one of the seven failings which the Genius of Hindoostan has fixed as the natural composition of women. She, having put that and that together, nodded her head suspiciously, and resolved to remain in her room until she was called.

"In the Hôtel de Flandre there are two staircases: one close to the entrance into the courtyard, and which no one can ascend without observation from the secretary, or some of the servants; the other exactly facing the front door, up or down which a dozen strangers might play at leap-frog without a chance of discovery. They both lead to a passage, on one side of which are the sitting, and on the other the bed-rooms; and, as many occupy both this floor and the next, any intruder might roam about without being liable to suspicion, or without being regarded as an interloper.

"It was noon, when a slight tap at the door awoke Louisa from her unquiet slumbers; and as it was evidently broad day, for the curtains are too thin to exclude the light, and the shutters rarely closed but in winter, she concluded it must be her servant, and without further hesitation she pronounced 'Come in,' quite audibly enough to convince the forward Mr. Cavendish that he had made no mistake in the room, for he had squinted into the different chambers, the open doors of which invited his peeping propensities; and being thoroughly satisfied that Louisa had not ventured forth, he resolved to visit her in her bed-chamber, or wherever else he could find her.

"Louisa, who little suspected that surprise, was extended in that careless attitude to which most resort when suddenly awoke, and when the heat is almost insupportable. Her hands were placed over her eyes, as if to exclude the light, which was painful from its sudden admission; and charms unrivalled were not wholly concealed, either by the dress or the covering. Cavendish saw and gazed, and he must have been more than man who could have turned from the fairest picture Nature ever painted. She withdrew her hand; and there, leaning over the bed, his eyes fixed upon her and glaring with passion, stood her betrayer, her worst enemy, Cavendish.

"Those charms were instantly concealed,—a modest blush suffused her cheeks, and the affrighted girl saw at once the object and the determination of the villain. She soon found words to give force to her disgust, and desired the intruder instantly to withdraw. Cavendish heeded not the command, but gave vent to the violence of his excited appetite in words indecent and indecorous. He had shut the door, and now he locked it; and then, with quivering lip, he thus addressed his victim. Holding his finger to his lips as if to impose silence, he spoke in a whisper, low yet audible, whilst a tremor agitated his body. 'Hear me,' said he, taking her hand,—'hear me, or court your own ruin. The door is locked—we are alone; and if through false delicacy you alarm your neighbours, what will be the consequence I need not tell. Louisa to be found in her bed, and I by her side! consider before you act hastily. The servant who will come will find his entrance obstructed; the knowledge of this being your chamber will look like connivance; your late ride with the stranger, your supposed husband's absence.——Hush! hush! there are footsteps along the passage; let go that bell-rope, and listen to one who is come to claim you as his own.'

"'Away, away! you false villain!' replied the spirited girl;

'thus and thus I show you how little I heed your caution or your falsehoods!' and saying which, she rang the bell with violence. 'Now stay,' she continued, 'while I denounce you as a thief to the police; and be convinced by this act how little you have to expect from Louisa Stanhope,—who, however much she may be fallen, is still high enough to despise the creeping, cringing coward who thus insults her.'

"Footsteps were heard along the passage,—the door attempted, and found locked. Louisa, calling her maid by name, desired her to break it open; and then turning to Cavendish, who stood trembling like the detected ruffian he was, she said in a firm voice, 'Unlock that door, sir.' He did as he was desired, and the maid entered.

"'How came that man,' said Louisa with a dignity little to be expected under such circumstances,—'how came that man admitted into my bed-chamber when I was asleep? Look round the room, Mary, and see that I have lost nothing, before you allow him to escape; and desire the landlord to come here directly.'

"Astonishment at the very suspicion of the theft, and knowing the disgraceful attack he had made on the supposed wife of his pretended friend, Cavendish was not long in resolving upon a retreat; and as he stepped into the passage, he met two of the ladies who had so civilly deserted Louisa the day before. The darkened room, the knowledge that Louisa was still in bed—or, at least, had not appeared,—and the cautious, hasty manner Cavendish avoided all communication,—certainly did not take from the conviction already entertained, that their former acquaintance had connived at this meeting, and had actually remained in her bed-chamber in order to meet her new acquaintance.

"In the mean time Mary's mind was not inactive. She had seen Cavendish the day before one of the party to the waterfall; she had gleaned sufficiently of his description to know that he was the person who accompanied her mistress home; she had seen the state of her habit, and had now caught him, a perfect stranger, in the hotel, in the bed-room, with the door fastened, and her mistress not yet risen. Strange misgivings rushed over her mind—women know how quick their sex are at backing out of a difficulty—and Mary considered the hasty order of the master of the house, the idea of the theft, as so many subterfuges to avoid detection,—nay, the very confusion, the perfect exhaustion which overcame her when she saw her chamber

vacated by Cavendish, was a confirmation in the mind of the servant that something was rotten in the state.

"It was some time before Louisa recovered herself sufficiently to go through that long operation of the toilet, and she saw that her maid was far from being the ready, obliging servant she had ever been;—her orders were sullenly, silently obeyed; the little chatter of household scandal and womanly surmises were hushed; and Louisa felt most poignantly the suspicion of her servant, and soon resolved to remove it.

"'It is very odd,' she began, 'how that man could have the impudence to intrude himself into my bed-chamber, and have the audacity to lock the door.'

"'Is that Mr. Cavendish, ma'am, the gentleman who rode home with you last night?' asked the servant.

"'Yes,' replied Louisa with some hesitation; 'but I never saw him before yesterday.'

"'Lord! then,' said Mary, who had watched the change in her mistress's countenance in the looking-glass, before which she was sitting, and apparently arranging her front hair, whilst the inquisitive servant was twisting the back,—'Lord! then, I wonder how he came to be of the party!'

"'He intruded himself,' replied Louisa: 'he is an old friend of Harry's, and therefore did not wait for an invitation.'

"'Well, ma'am, it does astonish me,' continued the maid, 'how he should have known this was your room. You couldn't have told him last night when he had his hand round your waist?'

"'What do you mean, Mary!—what insolence is this?'

"'Oh! none, ma'am, I'm sure; only seeing is believing, like, as the vulgar people say; and I have left the mark of the hand upon your habit, you see, ma'am.'

"'Ha, very likely, Mary, for he lifted me on my saddle after I was thrown.'

"'But, that, ma'am, was *before* the storm came on.'

"'It would better become you, Mary, to pay attention to your own business than to make those kind of remarks. If I account for it, that is sufficient.'

"'Ah! poor dear Master Harry!' continued Mary, if he knew it,—and the very day after he left you too,—it would break his heart, that's what it would. Oh, how I do pity him! that's what I do.'

"'Im sure,' replied Louisa, 'you are very kind and tender-

hearted; but it occurs to me that I am more to be pitied than he is. I wonder what is to break *his* heart?'

"Oh, ma'am, he'll hear it all: the commissionaires say you remained behind with Mr. Cavendish, the servants know it was three o'clock when you came home, and I'll take my Bible oath I saw him in this room before you were out of bed. You need not look so, ma'am,—thank God I speak the truth! Not one of the ladies have inquired after you; and if you had been thrown, of course they would have done so. Well, well, although I am a poor servant, I know what's right; and I should be much obliged to you, ma'am, to take this as a warning.'

"'As a warning of what, you impudent jade? tell me directly,' said Louisa.

"'I should like to better myself, ma'am,—I can't stay with you now; and when Mr. Harry comes home, he'll know it all, and I am sure he'll leave you directly.'

"'I am sure *you will* leave me directly,' replied Louisa, with all the calmness of virtue, (that is, as far as she was innocent in the point in question,) 'for such insolence I will never suffer. Better would it have been, and more creditable, for one woman to have assisted another, rather than to have forsaken her mistress, even had she been in error.'

"'Oh! Lord, no, ma'am; I never should get a character if I remained with you now. All the servants below have been a-talking about last night's business, and some of them say you never were the wife of poor dear Mr. Harry, and two of the ladies saw the gentleman come out of the room just now.'

"'Leave me directly; go out of the room this instant, Mary.'

"'Oh yes, ma'am; but I knows what I knows—thank God I have got a clear conscience. I hope you wer'n't much hurt by your fall last night, ma'am? If you don't require the month's warning, I hope you'll pay me my wages to-day, and it's not Mary Lancing who will trouble you, *miss*, much longer, I'll be bound for it,—that's what I will.' And thus, very unlike the sounds of harmonious music gradually diminishing in the distance, did this insolent Jezebel make herself heard as she retired.

"'Come back, Mary,' said Louisa. The maid obeyed. 'Fasten my dress behind; and tell them to take breakfast into the saloon. Mind what I tell you: if I find that you add one word to your fellow-servants below, you will have some cause to repent of it. I shall not discharge you until Mr. Harry returns, in order that I may hear you recount to him the anecdote

of Mr. Cavendish's insolence. The heart which knows its innocence defies the slander and the malice of the world. You will sit in this room, and take care that no one is admitted into the saloon; and you will desire the master of the house to have another bed placed here.'

"The cool manner in which Louisa pronounced these words had their due effect upon Mary, and she became a little less disposed to be loquacious.

"Louisa knew the hasty temper, the suspicious, jealous temper of Harry; and in an instant she saw the danger of discharging the maid before his return. Safe in her own innocence, she had resolved on the first instant of his arrival to tell the whole unvarnished tale, and to call the maid as an evidence of the intrusion of Cavendish; and scarcely had this forlorn child of misfortune matured her plan, when the idea of a duel as the necessary consequence scared her from her intention. However, this she parried by the reflection, that if Harry had already branded Cavendish as a coward, little would the latter heed the challenge. In all probability he would decamp upon the first news of the arrival; for the man who seeks by words and deeds to ruin the weak and to insult the forsaken, is not the hero who would brave the battle to offer satisfaction, or to court danger to gratify desire. Cavendish was a systematic liar; bold before those he knew to be weaker than himself,—a coward in his heart, a villain in his ideas.

"That day Louisa was neither inquired after by her former associates, nor again molested by her persecutor. One benefit counterbalanced the other evil. Her worst enemy was her own thoughts, her worst ally her own maid; for, in spite of advice or caution, the tongue of a lady's maid is very little under control of the proper authority, and wag it will, either for or against somebody.

"In this uncomfortable dilemma Louisa remained until Tuesday; and four times had Mr. Cavendish attempted an entrance into the saloon, but each time he found the door locked. He then turned his attack upon the maid, and endeavoured by bribes to gain her over to his interest. In this he at first failed also; for Mary was not so sure the reports were gospel,—more especially as her mistress retained a calmness of spirit which, if all were true, she must have been more than woman to have commanded. However, she promised to assist Cavendish, and, after some scruples, took the bribe. On this Tuesday a letter arrived from Harry, mentioning his probable arrival that evening. The

letter was couched in affectionate terms, and hinting his having drawn largely, and secured sufficient for their future wants; and, in conclusion, intimated his firm resolution once more to try his fortune in order to recover his losses. Her eye brightened as she read the letter; there was a marked affection throughout, and she felt that if she could but wean him from the vortex of dissipation by which he was whirled in the giddy round of gambling, and which would inevitably suck him down at last, his heart was still hers, that better prospects might yet dawn—that her character might be restored, if not entirely saved. Scarcely had she finished this letter when a waiter delivered her another;—it was from Cavendish. She hesitated in opening it. At first she thought it would be better to place the letter into Harry's hand, with a solemn assertion that she had opened it not knowing from whence it came; but that she was as ignorant of its contents as the unborn babe. Then came female curiosity—certainly rather a strong advocate for a hasty perusal, and then appeared before her the magnanimous part of braving all danger she felt herself secure in the arrival of Henry; and therefore, yielding to the temptation and the triumph, she resolved to gratify the laudible curiosity, and she read as follows, wondering as she read, that he who could stoop to the low artifices he had practised in endeavouring to corrupt her maid, could pen such a letter, with so much feeling and so much apparent openness.

CHAPTER VII.

"'Dearest Louisa,

"'The day is nearly arrived when, if you regard a sacred promise you will be mine. I feel, however, that some apology is due to you for the manner by which I obtained that promise, and my conduct since I returned from Coo. If any blame is to be attributed to me, remember that when a man *loves*, his reason forsakes him, he sees but one object, he strives to gain but one point—the very faculties and abilities with which God may have blessed him fall into disuse, and the passion for the object to be obtained alone occupies his heart, his mind, his soul, and his memory. My excuse for my unmanly behaviour is that passion; for my intrusion into your bed-chamber, my love is the culprit; my whisperings against your reputation, my very conspiracy against your character, were dictated by a feeling too fond to fear a difficulty, and too sincere to be turned aside without a desperate struggle. In this confession of my love receive my apologies; it is a virtue more inherent in your sex than in ours to forgive. I implore you now to consider me not as the conspirator against your honour, but as the guardian and protector of your innocence. Harry is in England: a reconciliation has taken place with his father upon the distinct promise that he should abandon you; and believe me that even should he return, his object would be to shake off the incumbrance—to rid himself of the clog which he considers and which he has mentioned you to be as far as regards himself. His love was a boyish passion,—it is satiated, and he is cloyed; you were his victim, and you are to be sacrificed: but my affection shall console you for the loss of him who never merited your attachment, and my sincerity shall be proved in the many years I trust we are still destined to live together. To-morrow I claim you as mine; every thing shall be ready to convey you hence,—your bill shall be discharged, and you my own. Oh, can I forget that night of storms and thunder, when, encircled in my arms I hugged you closer and closer to my bosom, giving and receiving those warm and envied kisses which monarchs might be proud

to enjoy, and which inspired me with new life, new prospects, and new enjoyments! It must be your care immediately to circulate a report that *he* is sick at Brussels, and that I have kindly offered my services to convey you to him. Once freed from Spa, my residence in any part of this world depends upon yourself; your choice will be my guide, your wish my law. I cannot conclude this letter, for whilst I write it I seem in your presence and conversing with you; I watch with rapture the bright flash of those dazzling eyes, and seem to catch the murmurs of response which flow from your envied lips. *I* will never whisper to strangers a reproach against your fame, *I* never will attempt to break the chain which love has entwined around me: and the more adversity may press upon you, the closer I will wrap you in my arms—the more sincere and lasting shall be my attachment. Farewell until to-morrow! a few lingering hours, and Cavendish and all his fortune will be at your feet. Adieu, adieu, best and fairest of God's creatures!'

"She placed the letter in her bosom, and heaving a deep sigh, threw herself upon her sofa. 'What security,' said she, 'has a woman—a confiding, sincere woman—against a villain like Cavendish? Who could believe this letter to be as false as the villain's heart? But happen what may, never will I disgrace myself by being the mistress of an unprincipled gambler.'

"Harry returned. Louisa rushed into his arms and wept for joy. Some remnant of early virtue still clung to my son,—even he could not restrain his tears; he looked at her with one of those fond impassioned looks, he gave way to the feelings of his heart, and that moment was a bright spark of happiness before it was entirely extinguished. To Louisa's questions he replied with an apparent candour. He had been, he said, as far as Antwerp; and there he managed to procure a large sum of money, which he had placed in a bank at Brussels: he was now in affluence, and again the smiles of the world would enliven his retreat. Yet was there something so false, so hollow in his manner that Louisa suspected what she did not dare to express. 'I thought,' said she, 'you had been in England?'

"The colour forsook his cheeks; he answered with a hasty voice, 'No; I did not dare to cross the water, for fear my father should learn my return—and I,' he added in a playful manner, 'be made a prisoner.'

"False, unhappy, ungenerous boy! he *had* been in England: he had discovered that I was in the country; he learnt from my

bankers the injunctions I had given relative to the non-payment of his checks; he had allowed sufficient time to elapse for his visit to and return from Longdale House; he forged my name, and he received five thousand pounds which I had lodged a week before at my bankers', and with which I had intended to purchase some addition to my estate. See—see, sir, the miseries—the crimes to which gambling leads! My son had nearly—very nearly committed a murder; he had broken the vow—the recorded oath taken at the altar of his God; he had forsaken his wife, he had deceived his friend, he had ruined the virtuous, he had plunged a family into disgrace and misery, he had violated the law of God, and now had sacrificed his life to the laws of his country; and yet was he young in the iniquity which he afterwards so zealously pursued! As if, indeed, the path of crime was strewed with flowers instead of thorns,—like the tiger which has once tasted human flesh, like the blood-hound that has once sucked human blood, like the dog which has once pursued its prey, or the hungry shark which follows the pilot-fish to the bait—so followed my son the disreputable course he had trodden—so lingered he on the road to ruin and destruction, that they both overtook him before he had the courage to 'turn from his wickedness and live.'

"'Harry, my love,' continued Louisa, 'you must arm yourself to hear something which report has busily circulated, and which will stab your generous heart to the core.'

"'It cannot be!' said the affrighted youth; 'so quick—the rumour could not have reached Spa already! Then go, Louisa,—go, pack up every thing directly; I will discharge the account; we must not linger one moment,—ill tidings never tarry, and justice though tardy is sure.'—It was the idea of the forging being discovered that shook him.

"'How kind, my Harry, thus to save my character!—this is again my own Harry! Oh, how I have longed for you! That cruel, cruel Cavendish circulated the report, and every one at Spa credits it.'

"'The devil blister his malicious tongue: but quick—if I am suspected—'

"'*You*, dearest Harry?'

"'Why, did you not say so?—did you not say the report had reached Spa?'

"'What report, Harry? You are strangely agitated.'

"'Ay!'

"'Four days ago Cavendish unmasked us; he—'

" ' *I* live again; it cannot be! Now tell me—I am calmer, more collected;—the worry of the journey, the pleasure at again seeing you, my father's letter, all deranged me—I was dreaming, I believe.—But, darling, Cavendish you were speaking of, that imp of the devil—what of him? What has he said that the town should credit, or that I should fear?'

" ' You must be cooler, more collected, Harry, before I begin; I will not distress you the first hour of your arrival: no, this moment is for love returned,—and as I cling round your neck, and kiss you thus, and thus, I feel all my cares removed, all my wrongs redressed. But, Harry, we had better leave Spa directly; and perhaps it were better now to settle the account than to risk it until to-morrow.'

" ' That I was prepared to do, and you speak wisely in recommending the payment of the account; for we gamblers are rich and honest one moment, poor and ungenerous the next.'

" ' Tell your maid to get ready, and I will ring for the bill this instant.'

" ' Mary,' said Louisa, as the maid entered the room, ' you must pack up our things to-night, for we leave Spa to-morrow morning early. Now don't idle the time, but be quick.'

" ' Am I, ma'am, to pack up master's things also: do you go together?'

" ' To be sure we do,' replied Harry. ' What would you have a man travel in one carriage, and his wife and his luggage in another?'

" ' Certainly not,' continued Mary; ' but I have told Miss,—I beg your pardon—Mrs.,—that I should provide myself with another place, and I hope she will not require the month.'

" ' Indeed! and pray, Mary, what may be the reason of your sudden departure?' asked Harry.

" ' To save my character, sir,' replied the impudent creature. ' If we serves people like Miss Louisa, we cannot get another place: but a lady here, who knows that I was ignorant who she was, has offered to take me; and so, sir, if you please to pay me my wages I shan't trouble you to take me away with you.'

" ' What's this?' said Harry, looking at Louisa.

" ' Leave the room, Mary, and do as I told you.' When alone with Harry, she explained the story concerning the Coo party; but she neglected to state the whole truth, in order, if possible, to save a personal rencontre: she had suppressed the late ride, and the insult offered to herself. Harry stamped and

raved, not for the actual discovery so much as that it might lead people to watch their movements. To shake off Louisa was his only idea: for himself, he was provided with a false passport; he could easily pursue his journey to Italy, under the inserted name of Rockingham; whilst those who pursued him, if such pursuit occurred, would follow his proper name, to whatever place the forlorn Louisa might bend her steps. This had been his plan, and this he had matured in his journey from Antwerp. Here was an opening; time was scarce, the forgery would be discovered, and he knew that the hounds of justice would scent his track. His face betrayed the black malignity of his heart; he walked to and fro—he answered not the inquiries of Louisa, who, watching every working of his countenance, continued weeping in anxious suspense.

"'Cavendish never saw you before,' he at last began; 'you must have given him some encouragement, Louisa, or he would not have dared to have divulged what I so unguardedly uttered. From his lips will I learn the truth this instant, and before I return I will have fathomed the lowest depth of this intrigue. Take care of this money until I come back: if it is as I suspect, we part for ever to-morrow morning.'

"The clouds of misfortune which had collected slowly over the devoted head of Louisa were now about to burst. She threw herself on the sofa and gave vent to the bitterness of her feelings. For him she had sacrificed

'State, station, heaven, mankind, her own esteem;'

and now to be suspected, now to be cast like a loathsome weed to rot in negligence—mayhap to wander a convicted prostitute over the face of the earth to be spurned from the door she had refused to enter—to be a houseless vagrant, a byword and a scorn!

"The interview with Cavendish was short. He advanced what Harry was too ready to credit: from him was elicited the late ride, and with it the assertion that Louisa had proposed it; that from her light behaviour her company had deserted her; that he had been admitted into her bed-chamber; and that, in fact, it was useless to quarrel about a girl who was unworthy of credit. Cavendish put the question in the darkest point of view—the impossibility of the sudden desertion of the females if something had not occurred, and that since that day not one had called upon her. He used every endeavour to persuade

Harry to desert her, and advised him to examine the maid as a confirmation of his statement.

"Mary was loquacious when her *opinion* was required. The disordered state of the dress, the confusion of the story relative to the fall, the print of the hand round the waist, and her solemn oath that on entering the room she found Mr. Cavendish by the bed-side, the room having been locked, and she desired not to disturb her mistress until she was summoned;—to a naturally jealous man this would have excited painful suspicions; but to a man resolved to part from a woman, and who considered his own safety as compromised as long as his name remained the same, and so long as his movements must be traced should he be encumbered with a family, it was quite sufficent. He now made preparations for his departure without saying a word to Louisa. The false passport had been viséed at Brussels for Geneva; and his own, in which Louisa appeared as his wife, was viséed at Spa for Paris. He had two carriages—the lightest he took for himself; and he ordered the horses to be ready at half-past nine, at which hour it was dark. Now came the parting scene. He cautiously avoided entering the house until a quarter after nine. He had seen every preparation made, and actually saw the horses harnessed; and when assured that his retreat would be instantaneous, he wound up his cowardly determination, and forcing over his countenance the gloominess of disgust, he entered the apartment. There was Louisa sobbing upon the sofa, her face buried in her hands. She saw him not, she heard him not; but she started like a detected criminal when she heard his deep-toned voice pronounce her name. She rushed towards him—she extended her arms, she would have fallen into his, but—with a slow and measured pace he withdrew. He waved to her to be seated; he repulsed her advance, and he checked even the current of affection. 'Louisa,' he said, 'we must part for ever. I could have borne much—nay, more than most men; but when I think of the sacrifice I made for you—when I see before me the attenuated form of my wife rising now to mock me for my base abandonment of her, and rebuking me for my violated oath, for one who has now deserted me, or has caused me by her shameless behaviour to become an outcast in my own home, and who, in her selection of a betrayer, has taken the only man on earth hated and despised—a man who was and is a gamester and a villain! I can neither forgive nor forget the insult. Louisa, we must part. Your guilt—'

"'Oh, no, no, no! Hear me, Harry! By heavens, I am as innocent as unspotted snow, saving in the sacrifice I have made to you!'

"'What! can guilt and impudence be carried so far?—But it is useless. Did you not remain behind until dark at Coo to ride alone over those desert hills with Cavendish?'

"'No, never: it is true I did wait, and it is true he rode home with me.'

"'Then why conceal this from me when you accused him to me this morning? The fall you omitted, sweet innocence! and there on your habit remains the firm print of the hand of that scoundrel Cavendish, and in a position which was never required to place you again on the horse.'

"'Oh, Harry, Harry, you will break my heart! Can *you* believe—*you* whom I have loved as few ever loved—that I would disgrace myself with a mere stranger?'

"'Did you consider it no disgrace when you escorted him to your chamber, and when you locked the door?'

"'What infamous liar has thus poisoned my Harry's words? It is false—as false as I am true! He *did* force himself, when I was asleep, into my room, and locked the door; but ask if my bell did not summon assistance.'

"'Such timid creatures as my innocent Louisa,' retorted Harry, with a sneer, 'might have locked their own doors in a public hotel."

"'You cannot believe it! My worst suspicions are confirmed—you *have* been in England, and in the shame which rises on your countenance I see the confirmation of the report,—you have agreed to abandon me, to screen yourself, and you have basely consented to sacrifice the innocent to save the guilty.—But, Harry, you are ill. Oh pardon me the words your sneer forced from me! take me again to your arms, confide in me, and life itself should be wasted in serving you. Oh, Harry, Harry, remember me as I was when I first yielded to your love!—think of the ruin I have spread over my aged parents, and how the daughter on whom all kindness was lavished has brought her mother's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave! Remember that it was under the most solemn promise of my marriage, should death free you from the being you deserted—that was the last persuasion which shook my resolution; and now, oh shame, shame! to listen to a man you have branded as coward—to heed the whisper of an impertinent maid, when I stand here to vindicate my own suspected character!'

"Harry was staggered at the boldness of the appeal, and as the guilty are always timid, he did not bear the look of innocence without faltering. Now he felt it more requisite than ever to break from her; he uttered in a low voice, 'It is useless, Louisa,—the proofs are too strong, even the most incredulous would waver. True, too true is the saying, "the once fallen woman must for ever fall." I might have known that she who sacrificed herself to me at the expense of her own virtue would be only true until another fancy occupied her mind: I see, I am convinced against my will of your guilt; the ride, the fall, the room, Cavendish's own words, your maid's report, your own suspicious manner—'

"'Hear me, Harry, this once. By all I ever held sacred—by my mother whose heart I have broken, by my father who has disowned me, by my God who has deserted me, I am not guilty—I never harboured one thought against you; and now I will never leave you—nay, start not, you shall tear me from your heart, and shall spurn me from this embrace, but leave you I will not—cannot.' As she vehemently expressed these sentiments, she wound her arms around his neck.

"'Away then, false woman!' continued Harry; and as in the struggle he endeavoured to untwine her arms, Cavendish's letter fell from its hiding-place.

"'What's this?' said Harry: 'a letter, by heavens! and by a strange hand. Let us see who is the favoured swain of my innocent Louisa.—Ah! from Cavendish! Lovers' letters begin any where;—what's this I read!—"Can I forget that night of storms and thunder, when, encircled in my arms, I hugged you closer and closer to my bosom, giving and *receiving* those warm and envied kisses"—— Hence, horrible, false, perjured, impudent woman! thus I destroy the evidence against you.'

"'Oh, Harry, tear it not,—save it, save it! The first part will prove my innocence. Justice, justice,—Harry, even the murderer is not denied that!'

"'Away,—your very breath is pollution since you breathed upon that villain!—Kisses given and received,—the very letter warmed near her treacherous heart, and not one word said about the correspondence!—Go, go!'

"'Oh, where—where can I go? Hear me Harry, I implore you!'

"'Go any where, rather than in my footsteps. Unhand me, I say! What, still clinging. Then thus, thus I rid myself of my burthen—of the falsest, the most treacherous of females!'

"With these words he flung her from him. The poor girl fainted upon the floor; when Harry, throwing some notes upon the table, rushed down stairs, got into his carriage; and before the forlorn, neglected Louisa recovered from the stupor, Harry had left her for ever and for ever, and was far on his road from Spa.

"It is here alone that I attempt to vindicate my son; for, leaving the forgery question aside, and considering merely the evidence as brought before him, the most confident would have wavered. Had he read the lettter, he would have been convinced of her innocence—had she shown it at once, it would have disarmed suspicion: but who is there cool and collected at all times? who can tamely hear himself suspected of a crime, and still retain the outward show of innocence? Harry was a villain in his heart, and I forgive him the forgery rather than the abandonment of Louisa. But it is ever so: the gamester cannot love—the excitement of play paralyses every other passion; and the woman who has a husband a gamester can never know the real joy of domestic happiness. Gamesters are generous, because hope is ever liberal: their generosity arises from the unknown value of riches; he who is accustomed to throw down hundreds upon one chance is not likely to inspect a bill, or quarrel about its amount. I feel myself overpowered by my exertion now, and therefore shall become a borrower on your hospitality for another day. But we must leave Louisa to her destiny until the fate of my Harry shall be disclosed. Good night, Robert! I hope the lesson already given may not be useless; and when you pass before your mind the memory of Louisa, prepare yourself for the natural consequence of one false step in a woman's life."

CHAPTER VIII.

The day over, the dinner finished, they again drew near the fire, and the old gentleman continued the story. It is requisite to observe, however, that he kept Robert in profound ignorance as to his name; and he seemed to watch him narrowly during the day, more to see how he occupied his time than with the desire of disagreeably spying into his pursuits. He himself seemed busy about some papers which he read and altered; but he kept always the opposite extremity of the table from Douglass, and appeared very careful to conceal his occupations. As he was evidently an uncommon acquaintance, Robert took care not to offend him, and cautiously abstained from glancing his eye towards him. This seemed to satisfy him, and age and youth lived together harmoniously.

"We left my son," the old gentleman resumed, "flying from Louisa, and endeavouring to fly from himself. That, however, is no easy matter; and the man who bears about him an eternal hell in his own conscience, never knows the comfort of one moment's ease;—he is haunted by the remembrance of his crimes, he becomes a coward, he fears the glance of the stranger, and in every bush imagines an officer. Harry had now assumed the name of Rockingham—as such he was designated on his passport, and he determined to vary his route in such a manner as to dodge any pursuer. He had left his servant behind at Spa, and passing through Aix-la-Chapelle, he directed his course towards Cologne, alone. At Cologne he hired a domestic, something between a courier and a rascal, and having shipped himself and his carriage he proceeded by the Rhine some few leagues, when he landed again, and taking post-horses made all despatch towards France, through which he travelled until he arrived at Cleremont, a village between Amiens and Paris, and not frequented, although in the high road, by many travellers.

"His first care was to get the English papers from the time of the forgery; but although every police report was scanned with guilty exactness, yet not one word could he discover tending to alarm him. The fact is, that the very day after he had

forged the check, I arrived in town to complete my purchase, and on examining my account I saw at once that something wrong had occurred. Being well aware of the desperate behaviour of my son, my suspicion fell on him ; and on asking who received the money, I was told my son, and yesterday. I knew what would be the consequence of my avowing the forgery, and made no further remark than that some more stock must be sold out, and gave the directions for its being done ; consequently nothing was ever known of the transaction, and you are the only living creature who is a partner in the secret.

"After sufficient time had elapsed, in order to lull him into security, my son despatched his servant to Paris to make diligent inquiries concerning the family of the Stanhopes; and having heard that they had long since left Paris and were residing in Rome, he decided on the desperate resolution of returning to the French metropolis. He took up his quarters in the Hôtel Mirabeau, in the Rue de la Paix, and seemed resolved to husband his remaining resources.

"At this time my wife died. She had endeavoured to trace her son ineffectually ; and I, enraged as I was against him for his shameless behaviour to me, wished her not to succeed. I had hoped that, deprived of money, and now awake to his misguided mode of life, he would have returned like a second prodigal son, and sued for forgiveness: I therefore kept back my wife's letters, little dreaming that her end was so near.

"She died of the sudden rupture of a blood-vessel. She had been my companion for twenty-five years ; and although we may have occasionally differed in opinion, yet we never once quarrelled, or allowed the sun to go down upon our displeasure. Her words were few after the accident, but those were all for her lost Harry. She exacted a solemn promise of my forgiveness, and she urged me to inculcate virtue in the breast of her son. In the very agonies of death her voice feebly gurgled, 'My son, my son!' and as, in the last floating vision of the imagination, she stretched forth her arms to press him to her heart, she died and left me alone in the world. This event detained me in England, for my grief was not feigned : no one can tell, who has not experienced it, the loss of a wife,—she who for a quarter of a century has been your hourly companion, who has watched your wants and relieved them—who has assuaged the fever of sickness, and comforted the wounded in spirit. Day has succeeded day, and night, night ; yet never has the morning dawned without a prayer for her, or my evening's address to the

Almighty been offered without recurrence to her name; and if the supplications of an infirm pilgrim before he lays down his staff and scrip be acceptable in the sight of Heaven, she shall know the affection of her husband, she shall rejoice over his prayer for her eternal salvation."

It was some time before the aged companion recovered himself sufficiently to proceed, and Robert began to be apprehensive that the exertion had overpowered him. He rallied, however, in a quarter of an hour, and Robert entreated him not to continue the recital which caused him so much pain, and which so agitated his mind.

"It is my duty," he replied,—"you must know all; the time may come when your knowledge of these truths may be beneficial to you. I am better now, and, thank God, have passed one of the most wretched periods in the anecdote of my unfortunate existence; and now for the end. In the end of Harry, how often have I used the words of the great poet,

'In all thy visitations, gracious Heaven!
Save me, oh save me from the dreadful curse,
A disobedient child!'

and sometimes have I been so wicked as almost to arraign the justice of Providence in having cursed me with an ungrateful boy. The usual announcement in the papers met the eye of Harry; and it is one redeeming virtue, amidst the multitude of his sins, that he dropped a tear for the memory of his departed parent. It appeared by some letters, or rather copies, found in his drawer, that he meditated suing for forgiveness; for one half sheet, on which was written the effort at reconciliation, confessed all the errors of his life, and gave an earnest of future amendment. Had this been sent, he had been saved, and I might have died in contentment.

"The grief for his mother's loss soon passed, and he once again ventured into the vortex of dissipation. Gaming is never eradicated; it may be apparently smothered, but the fire still burns—the smoke still testifies its existence, and it requires but the slightest air to fan it into a flame. Harry became wretched in his solitude; for idleness can never exist without a victim,—there must be some one to be pestered, some one to be bored with the eternal endeavour of the idle to rid themselves of themselves.

"Again had Harry recourse to gaming. Fearful of being

recognised at the Salon, apprehensive that the silence in the papers was a plan in order to discover his retreat, he never ventured out until dark; and then, instead of visiting the more gentlemanly resorts of Frascati's and the Salon, he crept away to the Palais Royal, and there, in number 154, soon managed to reduce his income and to lose his capital. It was now that all the bad passions of his heart started from their lurking-place. He who had forged, had murdered, had lied, had deceived, was not a man over-scrupulous of the means by which his purse was to be filled. The habits of his youth, the splendour to which he had been accustomed, still retained some command: he could not descend to the low manner of living so common to those *chevaliers d'industrie* who infest the French metropolis, having rooms filled with borrowed furniture to deceive their victim as to their resources, but who feed in seclusion, or who vegetate in obscurity. Money was now the idol of his heart. The less he had, the more he coveted; thus reversing the line which the schoolboy gets drilled into him when he blunders over his Latin grammar. To commit another forgery on me was not so easy; for his checks having been previously paid with a notice that no more would be paid, he was afraid to face the bankers, to whom he was personally known, and who without a letter of credit most certainly would not assist him. It then occurred to him, that whilst his creditable appearance was still evident, he had better resort to the Salon, and there borrow some money from the croupiers: they all knew him when his riches flowed in a rapid stream, and tended to enrich the large river of ruin to which they were contributory. He had already been driven to part with some rings, and a watch which in the moments of his affluence he had bought: day after day brought him nearer and nearer to desperation, and already had the villanous modes of procuring resources been familiar to his mind. Accordingly, having dressed himself with much more care than usual, he entered that place of ingenuity, that hotbed of ruin, that golden lure to wretchedness, the Salon des Etrangers. The servants recognised him at a glance, and he passed to the receiving-room. The noble marquis then at the head of the establishment greeted him cordially; and when the merry caster rattled the dice in the box, and called out, '*à sept*,' Harry's soul seemed to bound with delight. He was soon at the table, and soon forgot all his cares in the excitement of play. He lost his all,—at that moment he had not one farthing in the world. He who could have commanded thousands was now a beggar, and would have been a

cheat to have gained a napoleon. He called one of the servants, with the practised air of a man of fortune, and commanded rather than asked for two thousand francs: it was brought immediately. Harry had been known as a man of fortune; his gallantries had been calculated; and such is Fame, that he whose heart was hardened in sin and iniquity, was trumpeted forth as a dashing fellow, to whom fortune had been generous, and to whom most women had been kind. This is a species of vanity to which most Frenchmen aspire: a slight intrigue with your best friend's wife, a trifling incestuous intercourse, the seduction of your brother's daughter, the murder of some half-dozen of old companions in duels, tend more to elevate than to ruin the character of the hero. A Frenchman is always vain of his success with women, and his unerring aim in a duel: they talk of it as pleasing trifles, and as they sip their claret at the cafés, they defame their victims either in virtue or courage. The evening grew towards a close. Harry had not been very unsuccessful, for on his return to the hotel he deposited seventy napoleons on the table; so that he lost thirty, besides what money he took with him.

"It was now that reflection, the tax of memory, came too late. To enjoy a sound sleep, to awake refreshed from his slumbers, to have been blessed with happy dreams such as the remembrance of happy hours might produce, were unknown to him: he lay in a feverish kind of slumber, and not unfrequently some of the servants had overheard him scream during the night. His conscience was his hell. Never did the warning of that natural monitor ever slumber; by day, by night, the sentinel kept his post: he had been placed there by the commission of sin, and returning virtue and returning repentance came not to relieve him from his labours. The works of imagination, founded on the scriptural representations of the last abode for the wicked, frightened not Harry so much as the conscience that bade him turn at every step to see if the hounds of justice were on the scent: his moral courage had flown—he dared not to look beyond the grave, although he would gladly have courted it to have buried his present fears and reproaches. It was this maddening, unceasing fire which consumed him, No longer was the stamp of health and youth upon his sallow cheek or sunken eye; no longer did he dare to look the man with whom he conversed in the face,—his only courage was borrowed from wine, his only relief in the stronger excitement of play.

"'There,' said he to himself,—'there is the last heap of

gold I am ever destined to enjoy. To enjoy !—no, no, that is past for ever ! How am I to repay this ? I have promised on the Thursday following to discharge the debt : I have not a friend to whom I can apply ; I dare not, under my own name, again commit a theft upon my father. Oh, my poor wife ! driven to the grave by me ! Would that I had listened to your just censures, and, in turning to her who loved me beyond all love, have left the paths of dissipation and of idleness ! But now ——And there's Louisa too, an outcast from the world, a common prostitute ; or, perhaps, which galls me ten thousand times more, the mistress, the associate, the companion of Cavendish, —that devil who lured me to destruction, and by whose arts I was driven to commit the forgery. Well, then, I am resolved, since I cannot struggle against misfortune, I will overcome it. It was then for the first time he thought of suicide. He carefully marked down upon paper his various arguments in favour of and against the act. His conclusion, which was erroneous, —was this, that any man was warranted to lay down a load he was too fatigued to carry. He argued not upon the presumption of rushing unsummoned into the presence of his Maker with all his imperfections on his head. To him relief from life was relief from care : all pleasures had fleeted away ;—so young and so wretched, 'twas hard to bear, when by a struggle, when by the slightest motion of a nervous finger, the trigger would rid him of himself. It was then he loaded his pistols ; but he deferred placing the copper-caps in their final situation. He looked at them, he put them to his forehead, and saying 'Why, it is only doing as much as I have done, and all is over,' '*I'll do it*' was dashed on the paper, 'but I'll live until my creditors are clamorous.'

"It was on Monday morning that he met two Englishmen whom he had frequently seen at the different gaming-houses. They were anxious to make Harry's acquaintance, and he was by no means averse to the introduction. They bowed as they passed, and Harry stopping, they turned round and soon were in conversation. All talked of their losses, but of their resolution to return again to recover or to sink lower, and in order to suggest some plan of play they dined together. An intimacy was then established, and from that day until Wednesday morning they were frequently together.

"'Why, Rockingham,' said Musgrove, 'they treated you rudely last night : you must have lost a precious deal—some thousands of francs, I am sure ; for I overheard the servants

doubting if they should advance you more money, and although they called you by some other name——' Harry's face grew red in a trice. 'Have you been there this morning to repay them?' continued Musgrove.

"'No,' replied Harry; 'to-morrow I shall discharge all my debts in full, and satisfy the most greedy creditor. By-the-by, will you both dine with me to-day at the Mirabeau? and after dinner we can stroll to that infernal place, and so kill the evening.'

"Both accepted the invitation. The dinner was fixed for seven o'clock—a late hour in Paris, and Harry hastened homewards to give the necessary directions.

"At this time and at this hour I was in Paris. No sooner had I discharged my duties to my wife than I turned to reclaim my son. A letter from a friend of mine, my banker there, apprised me of my son's being in Paris: he had, he said in his letter, seen him at a café, and although he had not spoken to him, yet he was sure of his face. I lost no time in putting my scheme in progress: I had resolved to break in upon his solitude, and by tears and entreaties to recall him to the fondest and most affectionate of parents. At Calais I hired a carriage and proceeded to the capital; but, oh, how slow—very slow we appeared to progress! Half way on every stage the postilion stopped to take his glass of brandy. In vain I urged him on by promises of better pay—he smoked with the indifference of a Turk, and his whip hung over his shoulders in idleness. I rebuked him—he drove slower; when I recollected the proverb, 'that no two animals were so obstinate as a donkey and a French postilion.' I found all entreaties vain, and I threw myself back in the carriage, resolved to pay no more than the tariff. I will not weary you with the account of the most tedious journey I ever took in my life. The hope of arrival perhaps cheered me in my affliction, and when I drove into the court-yard of Meurice's, I bounded from my imprisonment with the step and the vigour of youth. My first care was to examine the list of visiters at the hotel. I found no trace of Harry. Then recollecting that he always had resided at the Hôtel des Princes, I proceeded instantly to the Rue Richelieu. From them I gained no information. I then in despair—for Paris is a capital concealing place—went to the police. The officers afforded me every information they possessed with that urbanity for which they are so justly praised; but here I was unsuccessful again. I then called at the banker's: they had not seen him—at least at their bureau.

I inquired at every hotel—yes, even at the Mirabeau—but with no better success, until, wearied and fatigued, I returned to place myself at a dinner I could not eat, and to be in society whilst I felt most lonely. I had not slept for three nights previous to this. I felt myself a desert tree in a wilderness; my only hope, my only aim, was the recovery of my son. I pictured to myself a delight, to which none but a parent is sensible, in throwing my arms round my boy and lavishing forgiveness. Fatigue, however, overcame me: a man at my age soon feels the frost of years nipping his endeavours. I could not keep awake, and yet I was unwilling to sleep. At last the thought occurred to me to visit the different gaming-houses; but some of my companions of the *table d'hôte* happening to be in conversation concerning these very places, from them I gleaned that no man of any pretensions to the name of a gentleman frequented the low houses in the Palais Royal, and that the play never began at the Salon until after midnight, or at any rate the company were few until the opera was over. I then retired to my room, left orders to be called at eleven, and throwing myself upon my sofa, was soon fast asleep."

CHAPTER IX.

"HARRY had determined to free himself from his worldly debts; he had wound himself up to the mark, and he now sat down to do the last act of grace before he mingled with society, borrowing from wine the spirit which nature, with such a load upon his mind, and such fearful results, denied him. I have mentioned that he seldom walked out in the day-time, and from the moment of his parting with his new acquaintances, he turned to his room and penned a letter to me. He had desired his servant to pack up his clothes, and had given him to understand that he should cross to England on the Friday; at the same time he ordered his bills at the hotel to be prepared and sent up to him, leaving the dinner account as a separate charge. His desk he carefully examined, and he destroyed every letter he had ever received either from his wife or Louisa. There was a small locket containing some hair of the former, which he wrapped up in paper, and on the outside were these words: 'For my father.' It was placed inside the letter, which was directed to me at my country residence, and which I have here, as I knew that this evening would bring me to the end of my history.

"'This is the last act an ungrateful, an ungenerous, and an undutiful son will commit before he goes hence, and is no more seen. My life is now fast growing to a close; and when the clock of the *Timbre** strikes the hour of midnight, my father will be childless, and his son in eternity. It is not, best of parents, trifles which have driven me to this act of desperation; he who has played the deep game of life which I have played is already dead:—a wife driven to destruction; the daughter of my friend seduced, and left without a protector and without a farthing; myself a forger—a man condemned by the laws of his country, and condemned also by himself! a mother perhaps hurried to her grave broken-hearted through my faults; a father declining into his tomb without the natural prop to support or to comfort him. I could not live, for I am ashamed of existence. I would not breathe to be a by-word and a scorn—to

* The *Timbre*, or Stamp-office, is almost directly opposite the Hôtel Mirabeau.

have the finger of contempt pointed at me—to hear the tongue of insolence upbraid me for my forfeited life—to be sneered at by those whose society I once shunned—to be shunned by those I once courted. I leave this world its debtor; and as I depart, having swindled those who have ruined me, so likewise I depart cheating the executioner of his due, without one friend to close my eyes, or without a companion to receive my last words. I have now conquered myself,—I have divested death of its terrors by shrouding life in horror. To you I now turn, my father and my friend, to implore that forgiveness which I dare not supplicate from my God,—to call from your heart one tear, and from your voice, when it is raised to your Maker, one word in my behalf. Forgive me, father! forget your repentant but your still affectionate son. I know my errors, and I confess them. It is an awful thing to stand upon the brink of eternity—to know that to-morrow's sun which shall rise and shine upon this gay and dissolute world, shall never more be looked on by me; it is hard at my tender age to go down into the grave whilst the hissings and the hootings of my fellow-creatures shall follow the dead with their reproaches and revilings. Still I feel that your prayer—your blessing—shall not be withheld. I stretch my arms towards my father, and in the fancied embrace I throw my soul to my God, and my last word to my parent. —Farewell! farewell! for ever farewell! As I have shunned you in this world, I cannot be so presumptuous as to dream of meeting your purer spirit in the next; but may the great God, the sovereign disposer of all things, so fortify your heart, that you may receive this with becoming resolution, and accept the last prayer,—the last word for your welfare, from your devoted —I dare not say your *dutiful* son. Amen.'

"In a less firm hand, and apparently written nearer his end, he calls upon me to protect Louisa."

During the time the old gentleman was reading this letter, he became dreadfully agitated, and Douglass was so overcome, that he was unable almost to breathe. He swallowed the very effort at tears, for he felt that he might be called to administer some relief to his companion. The old gentleman recovered after some minutes, and continued—

"Seven o'clock came, and with it his company. They were but three in all, and a repast had been prepared sufficient for ten. Every dainty of the season had been ordered, and wines the most luscious had been cooled. It was singular that my son should have actually written down the dishes he had provided;

and on several small slips of paper were written a few words, some of advice, some of warning: on one was 'Poor lost Louisa! the world will use you worse than I have done; it has no pity for the unfortunate, no tear for the afflicted;—and at the bottom of his desk, although it was evidently written that day, was a letter to Louisa, which I will hereafter read to you. I mention these incidents to show how capable the mind of man is to surmouut every fear of death—if indeed shrouding life with horrors *can* divest death of its terrors. The dinner was announced and served. The conversation took its turn from my son, who commenced in glowing terms a vivid description of the luxuries of life: from his exposition one would have imagined him surrounded by every desirable object, in affluence, with a conscience void of offence. Then the scene was changed for that of the Salon: he projected systems by which fortunate results were certain; he closely commented on the fairness of the play, the advantages of the bank, and his conviction that calculation could beat that preponderance; and even with the determination to commit the rash act, he lied in words, for he declared his intention of recovering his losses, and talked of to-morrow as if to-morrow was to dawn on him. Again the conversation changed, and women became the theme of admiration: no flush of guilt branded the cheek of the seducer; he revelled in luxurious description, and in his vivid delineation no modesty interfered to check the current of his discourse—it seemed to wanton in the remembrance of the past, and he drew from his own heart the picture most likely to warm his companions. Neither was the wine spared, nor the wit silent; in short, it was a carouse calculated to give his new associates the highest opinion of his talents and affluence. The hours advanced, for his life was now pitted against time,—and 'he who combats against that,' says Johnson, 'has an enemy not subject to many casualties.' The sand was rapidly oozing through the glass of existence; it wanted but one short hour of death—the clock had already struck eleven, yet no symptom of remorse for an ill-spent life was visible; he seemed to have passed the worst, and only to dread solitude,—for when his companions proposed to withdraw, having already drunk more than the cool gamester should touch, my son asked as a favour that they would remain until midnight, and then one glass should be drunk to their future friendship—and *then*. It was remarked by Musgrove that a sudden paleness blanched my son's cheeks; but he recovered himself, and placing some cigars on the table,—for he

had the ruling passion still in death,—he called for some brandy, and their conversation continued. Eleven came, and I was called, refreshed by my comfortable and sound sleep. I instantly departed for those hells of infamy. I entered Frascati's. There were sallow faces, starting eyes, anxious looks, and horrible silence; around the board some women of low character flitted, keeping the victims of passions—of unruly passions—within their grasp; but no Harry was there. I scanned every countenance. I passed round and round that table, but my son was not amongst those who debased their characters or staked their fortunes. I now crossed the Boulevards to the Salon. This golden region of demoralization was open. The splendid lamps shone through the windows, and the crowd of servants waiting in the hall, all of whom belonged to the establishment, convinced me that here my son would be found; for, in all his worst habits, the love of low company had never been his vice. I was denied admittance, as it was requisite I should be presented to the marquis, and he had not arrived. I stated myself to be the father of Harry; and the waiter who had advanced the money before mentioned, instantly informed me that my son was in Paris, and was expected there after midnight. To my question of his abode there was some delay; but a book being consulted, I was told he resided at the Hotel Mirabeau. It wanted now but a quarter of twelve; and as the night was cold I resolved to walk. With the firm step of happiness I passed along the Boulevards. I heeded not the brilliant cafés, I regarded not the hundreds who interrupted my path; I pushed through the crowds; I smiled within myself at the completion of my happiness, and I felt more satisfaction at reclaiming my son, than if he had fallen at my feet, and prayed for pardon. I rang at the hotel door; and as the porter pulled the string, I remember the impetuous push I used to open the heavy gates. I asked for my son—they knew him not; I looked at the list—no name like his was there. I described him as I remembered him. The porter shook his head; at last he said, 'There is an Englishman who lives here, and only one, but his name is Rockingham; here is a letter for some one of the name you mentioned:' and he showed me a note, which I afterwards found was an invitation to dinner at the Salon. I was convinced Rockingham was my son—hope is not easily extinguished; I insisted on seeing that Englishman, and after some little delay his servant was called to conduct me up stairs. At that moment the clock at the *Timbre* struck the hour of mid-

night. I heard a cheer—I recognised the voice of my son—I flew to the door, and oh! horror, horror! no tongue can tell, no words explain, as I turned the latch I heard the report of a pistol, and bursting through the apartment and following the two companions, I arrived to throw myself upon the bleeding corpse of my son! He never spoke—life was gone. In vain I called upon him in all the fond accents of endearment—he was gone, he was dead! I pressed him to my bosom, I chafed his temples—I hugged him, kissed him, forgave him, blessed him,—but ah! no words responded to mine, no movement of the compressed lips attempted an answer, but over the once vivid eye death had exercised its greatest power, and the glassy stare of the dead was too convincing even for the sanguine hope of a father. Then from the fulness of that hope came despair; I cried out '*I* am his father—save him, save him!' and I fainted.

"How long I remained I know not; but when I came to myself I found the room occupied by the dead, his former companions, the commissary of police, and one or two gendarmes. Some doubt seemed to be entertained by those gentlemen concerning his death, for one pistol was on the bed loaded, and the other, which had just been discharged, was found in a drawer so little open as almost to have rendered it impossible to have placed it there without opening the drawer. The suspicions of the police fell upon his companions; and had not the letters been found in which he announced his intention of committing the act, those gentlemen would have been placed under a surveillance not very agreeable. I heeded not their interrogatives, I listened not to their surmises or suspicions; I stood at the feet of the last of my hopes; I saw my son—my only, my dear loved son, a corpse. I gazed in horrid silence; there stretched upon the floor was the being in whom I had centred all my affection! I now saw not the dark parts of his character;—I remembered only the days of his youth, and memory portrayed all the kind endearments of infancy; I stood riveted to the spot, until, overcome by my grief, my head grew weaker, and feeling a sudden giddiness, I was unable to support myself, and fell upon the body.

"Spare me the recital of the last offices. He lies in Père Lachaise, the spot he disdained to visit when alive; and an epitaph, such as he himself had drawn for others, records his virtue and his age.

"To the last he had been himself: towards midnight he never once seemed to flag in conversation, or to sadden at the ap-

proach of his death-warning; on the contrary, he seemed to rebuke the laziness of time, and once or twice looked at his watch and wondered that so few minutes had flown. Just before the clock sounded, he filled his glass, and standing up, gave with a clear voice, a sparkling eye, and a steady hand, 'Those who love us.' I heard the cheers. He then merely desired his companions 'to wait, as he was about to change his *state*,'—those were his words,—'in order to play for a larger stake than he had as yet attempted.' Not a minute elapsed between the words and the act, and thus he fell.

"I have plucked out my heart, Robert, in order to warn you from the dangers of the path he followed. Here in a few words are comprised all that idleness can lead to. On this score I need hardly have troubled you, for I have watched your occupations and think them creditable. Remember that Fortune may yet smile upon you; and beware, when she has once bestowed her gifts, how you blindly follow in her train. Believe me, men are happier in mediocrity; the rich and the great are hated and envied, the poor are scorned and despised. It is in the middling classes that most happinsss is found. Never, therefore, should the gifts of this world be lavished on you, seek to increase your store by risking what you have to gain a little more; nor hazard that, the loss of which might cause the slightest regret. And now, Robert, I end my miseries. You see why I shun mankind; you know why I feel myself the poor unfriended wretch I am. Riches are to me no inducement to live; they cannot purchase me the revival of my son, and without him I care not to exist. I am alone, not one of my blood remains alive; and I care not to herd with those who can have no real interest in my welfare."

"Stop, sir!" exclaimed Robert; "before I thank you for the good advice—before I comment upon the mazes of misfortune into which your son rushed and plunged you, do grant me the favour to inform me of the fate of Louisa. Although a fallen woman, she risked all for love; and perhaps there may still be time to warn her of the misery of approaching age, and to assist her in such a manner as to restore her to some of the comforts she once enjoyed,"

"Would you do so, Robert, if you met her?"

"Most certainly, Sir," he replied. "Poor as I am, I could still find a little to assist one who has lost all by her betrayed confidence in one of our sex."

"Generous fellow!" replied the old man: first hear this let-

ter, which was written six hours before my son's death. I hope his repentance was sincere; because if it were not, he must have been to his last moment a hypocrite and a liar. I will not believe that any man upon the brink of eternity is sufficiently daring to rush uncalled into the presence of his Maker with a lie on his lips, or a falsehood in his heart." He read the letter, which was as follows:—

"Before I quit this world, I will do you the justice you deserve, and confess the faults and the crimes which have urged me to suicide. I *once* loved you, tenderly, sincerely: at that time the last drop of my blood would cheerfully have been shed to save your name from the blight my own conduct had entailed upon it. The love of play overcame the love of all that was beautiful—all that was affectionate; and when I resolved to leave you at Spa, I knew you were innocent—I knew you would never submit to the embraces of a man you most thoroughly despised; but I felt the necessity of leaving you to ensure my own safety. Hereafter my crimes and my misdeeds may come before you; but I will not embitter the moments more than my death will do, by convincing you that your love was lavished on a forger and a swindler. Return, Louisa, return to your family; they still are ready to receive you with open arms, and parental fondness, and by sincere repentance for the injury you have done them, an earnest promise of future amendment, and a resolution to live honestly, repair in some measure the mischief you have done, and which was occasioned by me. Even now, standing as I am upon the brink of the grave, with all the terrors of death before me, the retrospect of early acquaintance rushes over my memory, and, dearest Louisa, I see you beaming in beauty and in love. But, oh! forgive me, for I then really loved you: I gave a proof of that devotedness when I left my wife, blighted my character, broke my oath, renounced my God, for you. But now the hours fly; the last sand is oozing through the glass,—my minutes are numbered; yet Heaven is my witness that I ask not its forgiveness with more sincerity than I solicit your pardon. I have left a letter for my father, and have implored him to provide for you. I urge you again to return to those who still will cherish you; and I feel a calmness even at this dreadful time in the assurance of your repentance and your future happiness. Again, again forgive me—pardon me, and offer one prayer for your once beloved Harry."

The old gentleman folded the letter and replaced it in his box.

He wiped some tears from his cheeks, which had rapidly coursed down the furrows of his face, and saying "Thank God, it is done," he became more composed. After a pause of some minutes, during which time he fixed his eyes upon the cheerful fire, he exclaimed, "Such was Louisa; and now, thank Heaven, she is in comfort and in affluence,—but bitter was the path that led to it.

"When Harry left her at Spa," resumed the old man, "Cavendish was at her side. She recovered only to ascertain the confirmation of her worst fears, and to be subjected to the company of the man she loathed and detested. She did not hate him—for no one can hate who never loved; she despised him. When sufficiently recovered, she told him her determination never to admit him into her society; and he as resolutely resolved to follow her to destruction: he even dwelt upon the consummation of his plan with a hellish delight. The character of Harry was now gone: no man of honour could associate with one who had so shamefully violated the laws even of the most abandoned. To have left Louisa to struggle against the world, without the slightest idea where to turn, or whither to go, was the act of a coward; yet, as I said before, had he not previously determined to abandon her, I could have forgiven him his suspicions of her fidelity, since the evidence, offered as it was, and the only half-read letter, would have staggered a better man. Cast now upon the world, she lost no time in leaving Spa. The carriage which had been left, and the notes Harry had thrown, offered convenience and the means of travelling respectably. Her maid accompanied her, for the idea of seeing Paris again consoled her for her debased situation: moreover, it was believed that she was in the pay of Cavendish.

"The next morning at daybreak witnessed the departure of Louisa, who took the shortest road through Namur to Paris. Overcome by fatigue and anxiety of mind, this poor forlorn creature, whose fortune was now contained in her purse, and who saw the necessity of husbanding it carefully, resolved to pass the night in the former city. She had not long been housed before the door opened, and Cavendish entered and again importuned her.

"'Once for all, hear me and listen to me,' said Louisa. 'There is no power on earth shall ever make me yours. To you I am indebted for my present misery; I have still heart enough and courage enough to despise you; and I warn you, that so surely as you molest me, so surely will I inform the

police of the annoyance. Quit this room directly.' And thus saying, she gave no time for an answer, but rang the bell. Cavendish instantly retired, muttering something about 'the world's end, and satisfied revenge.'

"On Louisa's arrival in Paris, she boldly drove to her father's former door. She was relieved from all those feelings which must have been uppermost in her mind, by the porter's informing her that three months previously the family had left Paris—he believed for England. She did not remain one moment in suspense how to act, but ordering horses, directed her steps towards Calais. She took the Amiens road, and passed through Clermont not ten minutes after the arrival of Harry. Having arrived at the coast, she discharged her maid, who instantly crossed the Channel. She then sold the carriage, and making her luggage as convenient as possible, she counted her fortune, which at that moment amounted to forty pounds sterling, after having paid her bill at the hotel. She now crossed the water to Dover, and presented herself at the Custom-house. She was not troubled with many new dresses, and even the sharks of the Customs could not lessen her fortune by placing an *ad valorem* duty upon a bonnet. A porter carried her baggage, and directed her to a small inn not far from the ship. It was dark, the streets greasy and wet, and the dim light of the lamps shone not with sufficient lustre to show the face of a female who walked close by her, and who stopped at a liitle distance from a brilliant apothecary's shop in order to scrutinise Louisa's features as she passed the light. The stranger then crossed the street, and continued to watch her until she was safely lodged in the small inn. The agitation of Louisa's mind perhaps is a sufficient reason why she did not more particularly observe this stranger; but towards nine o'clock, and previous to her going to bed, she chanced to look from her window, and there opposite the house were Cavendish and her former servant, whose figure she could not fail to recognise. Her curiosity made her watch them; and in order to do so unobserved, she extinguished the lights, and by degrees managed to open a little of the window. It was evident to her that they wished to ascertain if she was going on to London that night; for when ten o'clock struck and the mail drove off, she heard Cavendish say, 'She is safe until to-morrow, so good night,' and immediately afterwards, they separated. It must be owned that many females would not altogether dislike the romantic attachment of a man who had travelled this distance with apparently one only object in view,

and that object a woman: many a heart has been softened by such attention, and those who argue with Richard, that woman may sometimes be taken,

> " 'In her heart's extremest hate,
> With curses in her mouth, tears in her eye,
> The bleeding witness of her hatred by."

would not wonder if Louisa's resentment was a little stifled by this marked attention. But she knew him well, and yet could not understand why, if his revenge had been satiated upon Harry, he should now turn round upon her. It was all in vain to think upon the subject,—that he *had* followed her was evident, and that he would continue so to do was more than reasonable.

"The inside of the Phœnix had the honour of conveying Louisa to town. Her maid was an outside passenger, but there was no appearance of Cavendish. Louisa would have spoken to the hard-hearted Mary Lancing, and would have endeavoured to have extracted the secret of her company-keeping with Cavendish; but the coach was full inside, and no opportunity offered during the journey to put her intentions into execution. The coach drove to the Circus in Piccadilly; and on inquiry, Louisa learnt that there was an inn nearly opposite, to which she immediately went, and having engaged a room at as cheap a rate as possible, her boxes were removed and she housed.

"Mary had watched her, and the next day Cavendish was there. He sent her letter after letter,—he changed his manner from the haughty to the solicitous—he offered her every thing but his hand, and it was quite in vain that Louisa again and again refused the proffered attention. Her object was to find her parents; and the only means to effect it was to send a boy with a note in a disguised hand to her former governess, who had left her family previously to their going abroad, and who was now living in Portland Place. The note appeared more like one from a tradesman than a lady, and the answer which fixed the fate of Louisa was, that 'the Stanhopes had been for some time in Paris; but that the last accounts of them were from Rome, where they intended to stay the winter.'

"It was not until this moment that Louisa wavered. She had now no living soul to whom she could apply; she did not know my address; and it was not likely that the father would countenance the frailties of the son, when the object of charity was

the cause of all his misfortunes. Cavendish still pressed his suit, and day after day saw the slender resources of Louisa gently ebbing away. She had advertised for the place of a governess; she had offered herself as a lady's-maid; she had subjected herself to the greatest annoyances; she had been rudely rejected by those her inferiors in every respect but fortune: she could give no references, she could get no character; and although blessed with every intellectual resource, she found herself gradually getting towards her last shilling. Hitherto she had paid punctually, and even now did not owe a farthing; but day after day saw the slender store reduced, and day after day she was mortified by continued refusals.

"Cavendish had scarcely ever let her out of his sight; it was now that he implored an interview; and Louisa, actually softened by attention which the most devoted lover in Christendom could not have surpassed, admitted him. In this interview Cavendish extracted from her the low state of her finances, and seemed now to starve the enemy he could not conquer. He regretted seriously her forlorn condition; he saw no chance of her success in finding a place, although Heaven knew how sincere he was in wishing her to earn an honest livelihood; he warmly participated in her distress, and would do all he could to alleviate it; he was unfortunately a little pressed for money himself, but he trusted that in a day or two he should be able to offer her some relief until she could be respectably provided for. Louisa was blinded by this feeling allusion to her situation; and in the belief that Cavendish would call the next day, she continued at her lodgings until her last farthing was gone. She then procured supplies by the sale of her clothes. She could not believe even in her own destitution. She literally lived almost upon air, for she contracted all her expenses into sufficient only to keep herself alive; but day after day passed, dress after dress had been pledged, until the once gay, beautiful, beloved Louisa —the darling of her father's house,—the life, the spirit of all society, was left with nothing but the clothes upon her back, and without one farthing in the whole world.

"She now began to despond. She had gone through four days of the week, and on the seventh she had always punctually paid: her altered appearance would have excited suspicion, and now she seldom ventured abroad, for her destitution was evident in her dress. The fatal Monday came, and with it came the bill. It is no true woman who cannot find an excuse; and she, with the air of one who could discharge it, said,

'Leave it there, and I will send the money.' But servants have quick eyes: the decrease of her wardrobe had not been unnoticed; the maid who attended upon her knew that some of her dresses had disappeared; and the landlord, duly informed of this, was resolved she should not escape to his disadvantage. He soon made his appearance, and on learning the truth was not slow in upbraiding her. Finding that nothing remained, he wisely thought that an empty house was better than a bad tenant, and gave her notice to quit directly. In vain she implored to be allowed to remain,—in vain she declared the respectability of her birth and her connexions, and her certainty that a friend would soon relieve her,—every fact was against her, excepting her hitherto punctuality of payment. She was told to depart, and in sorrowful steps she was turned from the house with all her worldly goods upon her back.

"It was about four o'clock, and winter had long since begun. Cold, biting cold blew the wind; a small rain and thick fog contributed to render her situation truly pitiable. She stood near the door from which she had been spurned, insulted by the wanton as they passed, and rebuked by some of low habits for being in their walk. The hours crept on, and still Louisa saw no prospect of a better fate than a lock-up house. She had called, and again had been denied admission to the inn. Her tender frame, unaccustomed to exposure, would soon feel the severity of the winter's cold; she trembled as she wound closer and closer around her the folds of her last remaining shawl. Attracted by the beauty of her figure, several people in passing turned to look at her, and she as invariably turned away, until one more resolute than the rest took her hand and whispered in her ear—'Mine at last!'—It was Cavendish.

"'Save me, save me, Mr. Cavendish, from the misery of this cruel night! I am without a farthing; I am destitute of food, of clothing; oh, hear my prayer, and turn not away from my supplications!'

"'It is good,' said Cavendish in a low tone, 'to humble pride. My revenge now feels the thrill of delight! Louisa at my feet, a pauper, without a home, without food, without a friend!'

"'Oh, say not so, Mr. Cavendish! say not so, I implore you! You know to what I was born, and what I had; assist me, and every farthing shall be repaid if I work until I die.'

"'The usual tone of all you women!' replied this infernal demon. 'You run into debt, and then you go upon the town

to procure money. I have no silver about me, neither have I any halfpence; but you are young and pretty, and cannot want long.'

"'Cruel, cruel man, thus to insult one whom you have ruined! Even now I despise you more than I did. Restore me a guinea of the money you swindled from Harry, and relieve your conscience of some of the load which will before long press heavily upon you.'

"'A very pretty way of asking charity, upon my soul! But I cannot remain here in the wet and cold, liable to suspicion from some of my friends who might pass in their carriages. Besides, I have to dine with Lord Plausible, and I promised to go to the theatre afterwards; and, as our little drunken divine at Coo used to say, 'we must make the most of the good things of this life.' Ah, Louisa! you have had your swing: you remember our little drunken parson at Coo?'

"'I can scarcely believe my ears,' replied Louisa. 'You who sued for me almost on your knees—you who have followed me to this step of ruin,—you who promised to assist me but a week ago, now to taunt me with the remembrance of my happier days, and to make me feel my degradation by thus asking charity of you!'

"'Fortune's wheel, my pretty Louisa, is always turning; and this you know, that *any* turn it takes now must be for your welfare. I imagine you cannot be much worse than you are, and therefore I propose one alternative: I will take you to a house where some of your sex reside, and I dare say you will find a generous friend in the lady who keeps the establishment. Thus far I can assist you: but I again repeat, I have no time to lose, and this chilling wind cuts me in half.'

"'Then think,' replied Louisa, 'what *I* suffer, deprived of half my usual garments! But that cold is trifling to the misery I feel whilst I look around me at this town of splendour and of noise, and find myself unknown to all but yourself, and actually starving in the streets.'

"Why don't you get work then, and not live in idleness?' replied Cavendish.

"'Stop, stop,—for Heaven's, if not for mercy's sake, stop! I cannot bear it. I have become a beggar to you, because I really thought that you had some regard for me. I cannot bear the insult,—I cannot longer remain to be taunted, to be thus abused. Once more I appeal to your charity, to your own feelings: and if I fail, here will I die!'

"'Be mine, Louisa?'

"'Never, never!' she replied.

"'Come, I will relieve you.'

"Louisa immediately advanced, and was about to place her arm in his, more from protection than from any familiarity; but Cavendish, who enjoyed the misery of his victim, instantly withdrew his, saying, 'Follow me? Good God! what would my friends think if I were seen walking arm-in-arm with you!'

"Vain, very vain would be the attempt to describe the feelings of this poor girl. She was a woman of more spirit than I ever remembered to have seen,—for *I have* seen her: she would have sacrificed her life any minute in the day for the man she loved; she could brave danger few would face; and had she not lost that gem which adorns the female, and which hurls her from society when it is lost, she might have been justly the envy of her sex. Believe not this, Robert, the tale of an old imbecile; every word is strictly, religiously true. She lives at this moment, rescued from her degradation and restored to her family.

"'Whither are you leading me, Mr. Cavendish? I cannot go much farther; for if you leave me I shall lose my way in these alleys and courts.'

"Cavendish stopped, and then said, 'I really cannot provide for you now—I forgot I was to dine early—you must walk about and keep yourself warm by exercise; here is sixpence, and if every body gave you as much you would be richer than I am. It's coming on to rain quite hard; I dare say you wish you were in your snug warm apartments in the Hôtel de Flandre—you were comfortable enough then. Now hear me Louisa: you *despised* me, now I shall see you by to-morrow as despicable as woman can be—your darling Harry is now revelling in luxury, you are starving—your seducer is in warmth and comfort, you in coldness and despair. Good night.' And he called a coach, into which he jumped and left her.

"Louisa was now alone. She walked in solitude; she saw about her those who abandoned themselves—who yielded to their appetites; she heard the language from which decency turns her ear, and modesty is startled and alarmed: which ever way she walked, she met with insult from the men, and abuse from her own sex; and needless, of course, it is for me to shadow her feelings—her bitter feelings and remorse. She had walked until eleven at night, and was then near St. James's Palace. She turned to the right, ascended St. James's Street, and

then taking Piccadilly, she walked on at a rapid pace, not knowing where she was going, until she came to Park Lane; and as at that time the brilliancy of gas-lights was unknown, that street assumed a dark and melancholy appearance.

"I have reason to remember Park Lane; for had not my legs been good, I should have left the contents of my pocket in a stranger's hand. There is, not far from where the houses end on the Park side, a small lane which terminates in a mews, and on its left is a flight of steps leading into Curzon Street. On these steps at midnight was seated the once envied Louisa. The weather had continued to grow worse; the wind was high, the rain more constant, the cold more intense. In vain she now had recourse to prayer—in vain she turned over and over in her mind the thousand ways by which the millions in this world gain a livelihood; at this hour of the night she knew she could not appeal to the affluent—she knew not where to apply, and all the natural resources of her mind failed to offer relief. The drowsy watchman as he passed her said,

"'Why, young woman, I think you had better go home.'

"She looked up, and in a faint voice said, 'I have no home.'

"'No home? Why, where do you live?'

"'Here,' replied the poor creature.

"Lord bless me,' continued the watchman, 'how 'toxication is gaining ground!' and walked on.

"The guardian returned, having called out 'Past twelve, and a cloudy night.' 'What, still here!' said he, shaking her gently by the shoulder. 'Why don't you go home? I say, you mustn't be laying about the steps in this way,—you must go home, or I must take you to the watch-house.' Saying which, he placed his lantern near her face and discovered her fair features. 'Why, what a pity surely! and such a pretty girl, too! Why, this is a bad station you have taken.'

"Whilst this was going forward, and the night-guardian was becoming a little amorous, three or four young men in high spirits were heard advancing, and the watchman left Louisa and continued his rounds.

"'For the love of Heaven, have pity, gentlemen, upon the most miserable of human creatures!' said Louisa, as two of the party approached; but as they gained the steps, one said: 'Well, good night, Charles, I shall see you early to-morrow;' to which the other replied, 'God bless you! and take my advice, leave off that private play, it will ruin you, as it has done

thousands.' A thrill, an indescribable thrill ran through the veins of Louisa; she felt as if the hope from being crushed had sprung into new existence, and as the stranger was about to descend the steps, she said: 'He who can give such good advice to a friend, will not deny his counsel to the afflicted.'

"Struck by the very unusual appeal, and from one who seemed the lowest of the low, Charles stopped. There was something in the tone of voice which caught his attention: there was a sort of sublimity in the mode of soliciting charity, that he, of a sound and curious mind, could not have passed. 'In what way can I by my advice serve you, my little girl?' said Charles kindly. 'Why, you look, as far as one can guess from that lamp's assistance, both young and in sad distress; and from the manner you have used in addressing me, you must have seen better days.'

"These were the first kind words that Louisa had heard since her actual misery; and they came, too, in a voice of benevolence, and a voice which seemed familiar to her ear. She burst into tears, and replied: 'I am an outcast;—I, who have known splendour, have now no bed on which to lay my exhausted frame—no home to shelter me from this cruel night.'

"'Who and what are you?' said Charles.

"'A daughter of affliction—one who suffered her love to conquer her discretion; who has been left by him who ruined her, and who is now an outcast and a pauper.'

"'Ah, that appeal shall not be in vain to me!' replied Charles; 'for at this moment, my own, my dear Louisa may be a forlorn wretch!—Good God! what ails you? Let me lift you again. Here, watchman, bring your lantern here.'

"'Nay, nay, do not let him come. I fell from weakness. I was afraid you were going to harrow my very soul by some recital. But do not—and that name too—it cannot be!'

"'Most heartily glad I am to see you so moved; it is a sign of a repentant spirit. I am no clergyman, but, thank God! I am a man. If my own dear sister could but be reclaimed, even by the vicissitudes of fortune which you have undergone, I would receive her, and even Harry should be forgiven.'

"Louisa leaped upon her feet, and turning the stranger towards the light, looked for a second time upon his face, and falling with her arms round his neck, exclaimed 'Charles Stanhope, forgive—forgive your sister!'

"I need tell you no more," continued the good old man as he wiped the tears from his face.

"I knew that Charles Stanhope, who had entered the army shortly after my son first became acquainted with him in Paris, was in London; and on my return to England after the burial of Harry, I hastened to discover his abode. I found him with Louisa under his roof. I did all that wealth and affluence could do to restore her to her former position—I placed her in independence; and I have thus endeavoured to make some trifling amends for the injury she sustained by my son's conduct. She is since married. She has lived to see Cavendish altered in his dress and manner, almost a vagrant on the parish; nay, he has even solicited charity from her—he has sued to her he nearly ruined; and I loved Louisa with a father's love when I heard that she had discovered the almost unknown retreat of that ruined scoundrel, and had sent him some money, with merely these words in the envelope, 'From Louisa Stanhope to Mr. Cavendish.'

"Robert, in this world true is the Scripture—'Man is born unto misery as the sparks fly upwards.' It is our duty to live for others as well as ourselves; and let me implore you not to spurn the abject creature of distress, or insult the fallen by ridiculing their miseries; and be this engraven in your heart, that when it shall please God to bless you with a wife and a family, beware of the danger of idleness; implant in your children a due and proper sense of religion,—teach them to be *honourable;* make it their boast to be gentlemen in the fullest acceptation of the term: and remember, that early habits of reverence to God and obedience to their parents is best inculcated by example; for true is the saying of Johnson, 'Religion, the rewards of which are distant, and which are animated merely by faith and hope, would glide by degrees from the mind if they were not reinvigorated and reimpressed by constant calls to worship, and by the salutary influence of *example.*'

"And now good night! You have a spice of the proper gentleman in your manner—you know that it is not the coat which makes the man; and little did you dream when you opened your pew-door to the poor, old, and apparently wretched, pilgrim, that you admitted a man who could command every luxury in life, but who cannot enjoy them. Here I could remain——"

"Then do remain," interrupted Robert. "Here you are welcome: whatever I have is at your service."

"Many thanks to you, Robert!—may God bless you, and grant you happiness in this life! Good night again. Do not alarm yourself if you hear me moving during the night: I am an old curiosity, and must have my way. Good night!"

CHAPTER X.

Robert felt considerably relieved when the old gentleman left him and retired to rest. The story of Harry and Louisa struck deep in his heart; and when he turned in a restless, feverish manner upon his pillow, he thought of the rascality of the man who thus could use a woman. O that he had treasured up the sayings of that man in his heart! O that he had never left him! His resolutions as to future conduct were like the repentance of the sick reprobate: relieve him of his malady, and his evil propensities return; physic him back into health, and you purge out his penitence. Sad picture of human frailties, but not overdrawn.

Douglass awoke rather later the following morning, and to his surprise learned that his old friend had departed—not this life, but from his house. The maid told him, that about six o'clock she found the gentleman in the hall, with the portmanteau packed, and brushing—if it is not a Hibernicism—his hat with a silk handkerchief. He desired her always to use her master's the same way: "brushes are bad things," he said, "and only invented by tailors to ruin clothes before they were half worn out." He put five shillings into the girl's hands, and said,—"Now tell your master to remember me; but I desire you will not awake him, and tell him that I have left his house. Thank you, my pretty lass, I will carry my own portmanteau;—so, here I am outside, and God bless the owner! for I have had more real pleasure in this house, humble as it is, than in the costly palace I call my own. Do you, Mary, give my kindest remembrance to your master, and tell him he shall hear from me when he least expects it. Good-b'ye, my little rosy-faced damsel! Why, you look like the first blush of dawn upon a spring morning! If I had your health and happiness, you might have my age and purse—and I should be a gainer by the exchange."

"Have you any idea, Mary, what may be his name?" asked Douglass.

"No, sir," replied the little servant, who had been much flat-

tered by the old man's compliments, and who exulted in her riches—her crown,—"No, sir, I never could find out; and although I did use the privilege of our sex, curiosity, yet all I could discover were the letters on a pocket-handkerchief which he one morning forgot to put in his pocket: they were worked in the same coloured silk as the pocket-handkerchief itself, and made out a B and an H; and on his portmanteau, just over the lock, and under the leather, was a small round plate with an H upon it."

"Did you never see any letters of his, Mary?" continued Douglass; "for you seem to have made use of your eyes. Did you never see any papers,—in short, any thing that had his name upon it?"

"Never, sir, and I am sure I tried all I could; for he was so kind in his manner to me, that I wanted very much to remember his name."

"Just run over to the inn, and find out if he went by the Cheltenham coach," said Douglass; "or if he went in a post-chaise;—in short, find out all you can about him. But stop,—put the kettle on the hob first, and get breakfast."

Robert looked at the vacant place at his table as a kind husband does when his wife has deserted him: he seemed to have lost a companion that he had known for years. For the last two days he had assumed a kind of parental sway, and had managed the fire and the coal-skuttle as if they were his own property: he certainly hardly fed the fire, and nearly starved his host with cold.

Mary's return produced no desirable communication. "He had gone by one of the early coaches, not to Cheltenham, but to London. They knew nothing about him, and wanted if possible to know less. They wondered how a gentleman who had always behaved himself as such could house and feed such a miserable curmudgeon, and allow such a skinflint to peck and perch in his roost."

"Very well," thought Douglass to himself, "the world may scoff and sneer, the old maids may turn up their eyes and their noses, but I shall ever be proud of having given that old man the run of my house: he has at any rate, to use the language of the author he always quoted, 'given an ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.' His story is worth all the wine he drank; and as for any other expense, he saved it all in the coals and the candles. If I follow his advice, I shall be the better man; and for once I have found out it is not exactly true, 'that advice

when asked is seldom well received; and when it *is not asked*, it is decidedly impertinent.'"

Thus Robert continued moralising and tacking together "wise saws and modern instances," until he remembered that four days had passed, and that he had never visited Margaret Anson, the prettiest girl in the village, and one, to say the truth, with whom he fancied himself very much in love. Until the old gentleman called, he had never missed a day without blockading the high street, or occasionally stopping close to the little garden-gate which led to the neat cottage in which was domiciled his only hope.

The Ansons were of good birth, and could trace back, by the means of old books, and now and then a straggling warrior, a clear descent,—clear at least to them,—from the Conqueror; and throughout the many ramifications of that old tree of genealogy in all its shoots and branches, it may be questioned if it ever shot out a leaf so beautifully formed, so exquisitely fashioned, as Margaret. She was tall, or rather above the middle stature of women; she had large dark blue eyes, with dark brown hair—nay, almost a black, which gave her countenance a light of fire when she blazed up, as she sometimes did, that could not fail to produce a most vivid sensation. But, alas! how very often do we see in human life the picture of Margaret! How often do we see the gayest dressed man—the dandy covered with chains and rings, bedizened with worked waistcoats and satin,—the one whose pocket and whose brain is the most shallow! Many may have seen, when shawl after shawl in all their splendour have been unrolled,—when silk wrapper after silk wrapper has been unwound, the dead, cold, disgusting corpse of a Tartar; and may know that, in spite of the gold which surrounds its surface, how bitter is the pill concealed beneath?

Such was Margaret,—a splendid casket containing a coal. She had the fairest form and loveliest face that man ever dared to dote upon; but she was idle, selfish, proud, morose. Margaret knew no pleasure but in society; to be condemned to her own resources was a curse she avoided by sleep. She was one of those mealy women, who, in spite of clear skins and vivid eyes, are strangers to the genial warmth of love, and never feel its influence saving when it gratifies their vanity.

Robert did not know her then, but he has since known her better: bitterly has he repented the re-continuation of his visits after the departure of the old man. He loved,—at least he thought so: he could never bring himself to any useful occupa-

tion; and he dissembled when he appeared to read and study in the society of the old gentleman;—wherever he fixed his eyes, there were Margaret's; and although he was blind as regarded her beauty, yet he was not blind to the situation in which he stood: he felt himself tolerated rather than encouraged; when no other man could be found to dawdle out the hours, Douglass was considered as a convenient friend, whose poverty would starve love, and who would never venture to offer a hand which held not a heavy purse;—in short, he was considered much in the light that the Author of "The Life of a Sailor" has ventured to pourtray midshipmen in 1809,—"Kind of dogs to fetch and carry." He walked in and out of the house like a tame rabbit, and was believed as timid and as innocent as Joseph; but his timidity arose from love,—he was miserable when absent from her. He did not dare to venture an offer, because he saw that whenever a popinjay with long spurs and died moustache made his appearance, he was decoyed by the old mother, whilst Margaret's eyes were turned as a breaching battery against the outworks of the soldier's heart. Robert has since believed that these men saw through the frail covering of Margaret; for although many flirted, not one offered. They say hunger can tame a lion, and also, that if you tread on a worm it will turn. Oh, how long—how many months did Robert hunger after Margaret! He watched her steps with rapture; day after day he visited the cottage—he watched for some favourable symptom, he looked for some responding glances, he listened for some unexpected sigh. He might have watched, and looked, and listened until Doomsday,—Margaret's heart was occupied solely by itself; and she regarded him more as a useful appendage than dreamt of him as a lover. Douglass had often met with rebukes and rebuffs in the unguarded hints of one or two of the Ansons; but Margaret had been either too kind or too sleepy to give vent to her feelings. Upon the subject of the old man, he had however some few difficulties to overcome. Some of his very best friends took the trouble to circulate that the account Robert gave of his own family was all false; that the strange man who had excited such attention in the village was his father, who had just met with some reverses in his business, being by trade a kind of *omnium gatherum* trader, and had visited his son in the hopes of getting some little assistance. The charge was supported more upon circumstantial than positive evidence; but your old tattlers and retailers of scandal or insults prefer the former to the latter;—it gives such scope to

the imagination, it supplies a better field for the war of words, and it gives a value to a whisper, which otherwise might have "died unheard away."

"If it had been a respectable friend," quoth one, "he would have trotted him to the ottage, and saved himself and his red-armed servant from the expense and trouble of a dinner."

"Ay," replied a second; "and he would not have moped all day in his narrow cell like a monk at his confession, had he not been ashamed of his father, and willing to avoid interrogation."

So that whilst Douglass was cherishing an old friend of his father's—whilst he was making an old and infirm man enjoy some of the blessings of this life, he was incurring all the malice, all the venom of a female community.

The attorney of the village, about as great a rogue as that honourable society can boast, only shook his head and observed, "Poor fellow! it is not his fault if his father is a hawker of rags about the town; no man is responsible for the birth of his sire." The parson, who was an honest, excellent person, asked what it could signify to others if Mr. Douglass chose to feed the decrepit, or extend his charity to the infirm. But amongst the women he lost considerable ground,—firstly, for having done a good action in admitting the stranger to his pew, which was called vanity; and secondly, for having forced himself into their society under false colours.

Robert could not but observe this: the alteration in the nods of the ladies was evident; he was never asked to join the attorney and the doctor at whist, nor was he ever favoured after church with the friendly bow of acquaintance; the fact is, he was nearly sent to Coventry, and by being still admitted to the Ansons, nearly bred a division in that once peaceful neighbourhood.

One day in spring, for the winter had passed and he had been neglected, when he was walking by the side of Margaret, and making all manner of pretty speeches, she suddenly turned round, and looking him full in the face, said—"Pray Robert," (she always called him Robert,) "who was that old man who visited you for four days in November last?"

"Why really, Margaret," he answered, (observe the familiarity,) "I do not know."

"Nonsense!" retorted the girl: "you ought to be ashamed to deny one whom you must know!"

"That may all be very just as a remark," he interrupted; "but it is a fact that I can put my hand upon my heart and

solemnly swear that I do not know his name, his calling, or his abode."

"Well, Robert, I am sorry to hear you say so, as it must breed a little distrust between us: I cannot pay you so bad a compliment as to believe you would admit a stranger whom you never saw in your life into your house, or that you are quite such a fool as to think we believe it."

"I am sure, Margaret," he replied, not a little hurt by the remark, "that I have never since I had the pleasure of knowing you—and a great and real pleasure it has been—told you one word of untruth; and I repeat again, that I never saw that man before or since his visit here; that I do not know his name; and that my servant, as inquisitive as most of your sex, failed also to arrive at this desirable knowledge;—nay, if you distrust me, perhaps you will credit her."

"Upon your honour and word," said Margaret, looking right through him with those beautiful eyes of hers, "is not that dirty old man your father?"

Robert looked at her in cool disgust before he answered the question. "Margaret," he said, for his blood was up—"Margaret, you believe me as false as yourself!" She started with astonishment. "Nay, hear me out," he continued. "You hear me pledge the honour and word of a gentleman that I do not know this person; and you then, having evidently stamped me as a liar in your own mind, ask me if he is not my father. Could I by any subterfuge, by any compromise of conscience, if that man were my father, say that I did not know either his name, his calling, or his abode?"

"Every one in the village," continued Margaret, "thinks him your father; and they say that you are not the person you represent yourself to be. It is the generally circulated report that has made me ask the question; and although you pledge your word and your honour, which I am bound to believe, yet I say it again, that I never thought you such a noodle before."

"And can you," he replied, "listen to all the rubbish which idle women think proper to talk? Rely upon this, Margaret," he said as he took her hand, "that I never have told you a falsehood, and that all I say or do when by your side is guided by sincerity and truth." Margaret looked up, and Robert felt his heart bumping about like a parched pea upon a drumhead.

It has been remarked before now, that the greater the excitement, the greater is the reaction; and those are trivial observers of life who fail in seeing that a woman's heart becomes

the softest immediately after she has steeled it in obduracy. Hence women who resolve not to accept a man wind themselves up to the refusal, and the next second burst into tears. This is a natural reaction, and *not* hypocrisy, as has been averred.

There was a kind of melting softness in Margaret's eyes: she looked at Douglass as much as to compassionate him for the virulence of the slander he had undergone, and he felt that now was the time to make the most rapid advances. He had for the last six months taken every opportunity of admiring her beauty; he had painted her as the perfection of a woman, although he was not blind to her occasional coolness. This, lover-like, he twisted into a trial of his affection, and never once thought it could arise from a chilliness of heart or an utter want of passion. The enemy—that is, her natural apathy—was now off his guard; she seemed warmed, perhaps by his refutation of the report, and being conscious—for she had a little of that common commodity—that she had insulted him, she felt inclined to soften the asperities and to acknowledge the reaction. "A faint heart," he said to himself, "never won a fair lady: now is the time; this is the tide which taken in the flood leads on to glory; here's a chance, here's an opening, and by —— I'll try!" At this moment he quite forgot how unlikely it was that a girl of eighteen, with a beauty rarely equalled, and never surpassed, would relinquish all worldly ambition and sink down as the quiet wife of Robert Douglass, he being then in possession of one hundred and fifty pounds a year. Love is blind.

He held Margaret's hand, and returned the gaze of those beautiful blue eyes;—he thought he never saw her look so pretty as in that plain straw bonnet with the pink riband: he held her hand, and throwing all his soul into his eyes, began to break ground. "Margaret,"—he said, and there he came to a full halt. She looked at him as much as to say, "Go on." Robert gently squeezed her hand—he felt a kind of convulsive return. "Margaret,"—he began again.—

"Robert,"—she said.

"Margaret, can you listen to me?"

"To be sure I can: Robert, do you think I am deaf?"

Robert felt as if the old enemy was coming back to her protection.

"Margaret," (the third time is always the strongest,) he began again, "I told you before that I never mentioned one word to you which was not strictly true; and now I tell you another

truth I have longed many times to divulge. Look at this dear little hand in mine, Margaret." She looked upon it as if it had been a stone. "Do you see how well formed mine is to hold and to protect it?"

"Yes," said she.

Robert startled and continued: "Then accept mine as the protector of yours. Oh, make me really happy! Whatever I have is yours. Say, say you love me,—say you accept me as your husband." She looked at him for some time: they say, if a woman considers, she is lost. Robert trembled with anxiety; he felt his limbs totter beneath their weight; he watched every glance—the murder was out, he had spoken, and now his doom was about to be completed. He was afraid the poor girl would have fainted; he was ready to catch the falling angel in his arms; he was in the horror of suspense, when she turned short round upon her heel, burst out a-laughing, and ran home, leaving Robert like a statue fixed to the ground, and looking at the flying figure of the nymph.

It would not be a very pleasant amusement to rummage recollection for the bitter feeling of disappointment, wounded pride, or crushed hope, which overcame him; but such was his very unusual manner at dinner, that even Mary was struck into such a heap, that she thought him, what he certainly was for the moment, mad. A note, however, from the cottage, begging him to spend the evening there, reanimated him; although he might have seen that the invitation placed his tamed-rabbit visits rather out of the question for the future.

Mrs. Anson was a kind woman, and knew how to feel for others, for she had suffered herself when her husband died;—she knew by experience how hard it is to part with one we love; and she could likewise imagine that a man might feel a rebuke of love, and feel it deeply. Margaret had told the whole story just as unconcerned as if Robert had offered her an unripe pear and she had refused it; she had entered into all the particulars without the slightest emotion, and not knowing the power of feeling, she could not credit that she had inflicted pain upon another. Robert accepted this invitation, for hope seemed concealed in Pandora's box; he thought all the evil was out, and that her mother might have altered the determination of the daughter. Margaret met him at the door with her usual welcome: she asked him if he remained long in the field after she left him; and if he had not been blinded by her beauty, he might have known her for the heartless, worthless creature he after-

wards found her. Mrs. Anson took him aside, and in the kindest manner offered a palliative for her daughter's behaviour: she said, that for herself and her daughter she could answer, by saying that Margaret had never observed any particular alteration on Robert's part; and that the frequent intimacy for such a length of time without any declaration, was a sufficient proof to them that he had no serious intentions: she then, as kindly as woman can speak about insuperable objections, mentioned his fortune, and her knowledge that he had no expectation for the future; and, after a vast number of compliments to himself, declared that Margaret still highly valued his friendship, although she hoped he would never mention the subject of love any more. Once or twice a lurking hint about the old gentleman convinced Robert that she had been infected by the surrounding scandal, and that although she spoke in honeyed accents, yet that she believed him to be very little better than a common impostor.

"My dear Robert," she said, as she laid her hand upon his shoulder in the most friendly manner possible, "you must know that a girl of Margaret's beauty naturally looks a little above the humdrum life of a village like this. It is true we see very little company; but next year I intend to take my children to town:—it is a duty I owe her, who certainly is very far above the common herd of womankind, to give her a chance of success in life; and I know I am speaking to a reasonable person, who, although a little smitten by charms irresistible, yet has control enough over himself to be absent for four days, when he was merely engaged by an elderly *gentleman*," (she laid a particular emphasis on that word,) "to whom he was a perfect stranger, and, I am given to understand, remains so now."

"I understand you perfectly, Mrs. Anson," replied Robert, "I assure you; and kind as has been your manner in thus giving me to understand that I have no prospect of success hereafter, yet I cannot help lamenting that you cling to some sinister idea relative to that old man, who was a friend of my father's, and to whom I extended the little civility I had to offer."

"Oh, then you did know him?" she hastily replied.

"No, indeed I did not," said Robert; "and if at this moment I were to be hung at the gallows, and the naming of that man's name would save me, I should be hung to a certainty." She turned away with an incredulous sneer, and Robert saw his sentence of exclusion written legibly enough on the countenance of his dear friend Mrs. Anson.

It happened about four months afterwards, that one or two

young men dropped in to Mrs. Anson's, and Robert was one of the party. After that once national, and now doubly national beverage, since it is picked from our own hedges—tea, a dance was proposed, and Robert stood up opposite to Margaret in a state of utter despondency. He thought it was for the last time that he should touch her hand; and although he did not feel any particular angry feeling against her or her mother, yet he felt mortified that he was so long discredited: it was evident that the old ragman was believed to be his sire, and that from his situation in life he was ashamed of his parent. In the course of a man's life, he must face many miseries, and be occasionally supremely unfortunate; but it is a strange fact, that no calamity ever overtakes us without our being forwarned that something is about to occur. A man still exists who once stumbled into law, and although he felt his case was sure, if truth and justice could avail, yet before he went into court he remarked to the attorney, "It is no use, I *feel* I am to lose it;" and he did. A month previously to this, and the same trial, when the morning came on which that case was to be heard, he said, "I will lay thousands that I am not beat this day:" the trial was postponed, and both warnings proved correct. Let not the hasty reader brand this as a boyish superstition; our greatest heroes have been forewarned of their fate, and have been shot the same evening. Nelson had a tinge of this at Trafalgar, and Sir Peter Parker openly expressed it the night of his death.

They had danced one quadrille, and Robert had lugged his legs after him something like a sweep does his broom, when he felt a lightness of heart for which he could not account. Although in the titters of the girls and the looks of the men he could see that he was the object of distrust and remark, yet suddenly he felt an elasticity of mind which a Londoner feels when hastily removed to Paris. He laughed and flirted, and, in spite of all untoward events, he never felt happier in his life. About eleven o'clock the dance was done, the tray brought, and silence succeeded the noise of youth and merriment. It was during that pause, that the servant entered, and said that Mr. Douglass was wanted immediately at home,—that a gentleman had arrived from London in great haste and begged that Mr. Douglass would see him directly.

To the inquiries, Robert only learned that the stranger was a middle-aged man, that he came down post, and had not arrived more than five minutes. In a country village, a post-chaise is an object of scrutiny by day; but when it comes in the shape

of a despatch by night, every tongue is sure to be employed in giving forth opinions upon the object. The carriage and horses had gone to the Elephant and Dormouse, and curiosity was strongly excited. Robert advanced to shake hands for the last time, as he thought, with Mrs. Anson. He remarked a considerable change in her manner; she seemed softened down a little, and hoped Robert would call to-morrow. Even Margaret was kind, and in the expression that she hoped nothing serious had occurred, betrayed a momentary feeling for his interest, and, he thought, welfare in life.

CHAPTER XI.

Robert's house was not more than five hundred yards from the cottage, and he took about two hops, skips, and jumps to arrive at the door. Here he found a short pragmatical-looking man in full possession of the fire, rubbing his hands and looking quite at home. On Robert's entrance he rose, and having asked him if he was Mr. Robert Douglass, the son of John Douglass, deceased, he gave him a very smiling look, and told him that he had come post to see him, having business of great importance to transact.

"In the first place, sir," he said to Robert, "it is my duty to ask you some few questions, which I trust you will do me the favour to answer." Douglass nodded assent, and he proceeded. "Pray, sir, were you ever acquainted with one Mr. Benjamin Houghton?"

"Never, sir," replied Douglass; "I have never had the honour of knowing any such person, I assure you." And Robert began to look round his room to see that none of his furniture had walked.

"I think, sir, replied the little quiz, "you must be labouring under some mistake, for I am sure *I* have made none. Is not this your name, the name and number of your street, the village in which you reside, the name of your father and your family?"

Douglass looked at the memorandum, which was made in a pocket-book, and then regarding his visiter full in the face, (he could have pocketed *him* had it been requisite,) he answered, "Yes, sir, most certainly, this can be meant for no other than myself."

"If, sir," continued the stranger, "you have any letter directed to you which may have come by the post, will you be kind enough to show me the direction?"

"To be sure I will," replied Robert, opening his desk and handing out one, which the little gentleman ran his eye over, and returned to him, saying, "Are you quite sure, sir, you do not know any person of the name of Benjamin Houghton?"

"I am just as certain, sir, as that I have the honour of seeing

you before me," replied Douglass. "To the best of my knowledge and belief, I only have had one person besides yourself inside these doors with whose name I was not acquainted; and he was an old gentleman to whom I offered some civility."

"Is it long, sir, since he left you?" continued the stranger.

"It may be now about three or four months," was replied.

"Will you describe him, if you please? for I fancy this is the same gentleman," resumed the stranger.

Robert did so in no very good humour; for he by no means relished this kind of examination, and certainly was not in the vein to be over and above civil to this stranger, for he put the questions to him as a matter of right, which Robert did not comprehend.

"I am satisfied," replied the stranger, "that we have made no mistake. And now, Sir, I shall, after apologising for what may seem a liberty, convey to you a piece of intelligence which I hope may convince you that my questions were absolutely necessary. I am, sir, the solicitor of the late Mr. Benjamin Houghton; and I have no doubt, from his general eccentric manner, that he for some purpose,—perhaps the unfortunate death of his son, who committed suicide in Paris,—concealed his name. He has indeed for some few years been a kind of wandering hermit—"

"He used to call himself a pilgrim," Robert interrupted.

"You are right, sir, and he seldom remained long in one place." Here the solicitor paused.

"He has been the cause of great anxiety to me," replied Robert; "for, from the negligence of his dress, his peculiarity as to carrying his own portmanteau, and the cautious manner, when he related the whole circumstance of his son's connexion with Miss Louisa Stanhope, of concealing his name, I have been unable to contradict the malicious scandal which idle women have circulated very much to my injury; they have, in the plenitude of their goodness, called him a hawking pedler, and dubbed the good old soul as my father. He appeared to me to be a gentleman by birth and manner, although sadly soured by the world."

"I wish he had been my father," replied the solicitor; "and I have no doubt that you will have no cause to regret your civility and your attention to him. But to the point: he is dead—"

"I am truly sorry to hear it," replied Robert; "for I grew much attached to him, and the contentment he seemed to enjoy in my society made me anxious to see him again."

"Of course, sir, you are already prepared to hear that he has left you some money."

"Some trifling mark of his esteem, I suppose," said Douglass, "and for which I confess myself thankful, however little it may be. You see here, sir, all my worldly goods; and you will do me the favour of remaining here to-night, so I shall take the liberty of ordering my spare bed to be ready." He then rang the bell; and Mary, who had been listening at the door and caught the sound of money left—dead old gentleman, &c. appeared instantly to attend the summons.

"Of this money," Robert said, "we can talk to-morrow, for I suppose you are rather tired."

"You certainly, Mr. Douglass, take things as coolly as any philosopher. You are aware, I suppose, that Mr. Houghton died very rich indeed?"

"I am in remembrance of his having spoken once or twice of his fortune," replied Douglass, "and that he would willingly give every farthing to restore his son to life; but as to the amount, I can form no estimate whatever,—from his dress he was no Crœsus."

"It was his dress and abstemious manner of life which made him the rich man he was," continued the solicitor: "his property has wonderfully increased during its nursing."

"I hope he has provided for Louisa," remarked Robert; "for although I have never seen her, yet from his account she must have suffered much from the behaviour of his son. He often mentioned his having done all that fortune could do to restore her to her proper position."

"He has not neglected her; for after some few trifling legacies, one of which is to myself," said the stranger, "he has left his fortune between Louisa and *yourself*."

"Sir?" said Robert.

"You will find yourself by these presents," said the little man, smiling, "in possession of £70,000."

"Damnation!" said Robert; and he jumped up and kissed the attorney. He thought he was mad, and got up in the corner; but Robert caught him by the coat: "Sit down," said he, —"out with it all;" and then looking him full in the face, said, "Are you quite certain you are not humbugging me?"

"Humbugging you, sir!" replied the solicitor, returning his look. "I tell you, sir, I am his solicitor, his executor, his oldest friend, and now come down to do the last act honourably,—to put you into quiet possession, to take you to town to-morrow, and—"

"To give me your advice, my friend," interrupted Robert,—"to check my first lavish expenditure; to teach me not to rush into extremes,—in short, to be *my solicitor, my friend.*"

"I'm sure I shall be most happy; and as I have no reason to disguise my name—for I defy the devil himself, although I am an attorney,—I introduce myself to you as Mr. Verity, of the firm of Verity, Honor, and Co., Argyle Street."

"Now, Mr. Verity, I'll have some supper," said Robert; "and you and I will break through all steady habits and crack a bottle. Seventy thousand pounds and Margaret Anson!"

"No, sir; Louisa Stanhope."

"Yes, I forgot.—Mary, have you any meat in the house?" said Robert, almost pulling the bell down.

"No," replied the servant; "I ate the last of the cold steak you left at dinner."

"Cold steak!" said Robert, laughing: "go and buy me the whole of Cleaver's shop, and dress it for supper."

"Nay, nay," interrupted Verity; "here I begin my advice and open my account. Mary, run to the inn and desire them to send a plate of ham and a cold fowl."

"Money, sir, if you please," said Mary, curtseying and looking at Robert.

"I have not enough about me to jingle upon a tombstone," replied Douglass: "tell them I'll pay them to-morrow."

"No, no," said Verity: "I thought you might want some supplies, so I brought you down fifty pounds. Here, Mary, my child, take this sovereign and pay for it: and be back as soon as possible, for it grows late, and I must return to town early to-morrow."

"Order four horses to be here with this gentleman's carriage at ten precisely," said Robert. "I vow I will go out of this scandalous parish with a flourish. Now, Mr. Verity, it is no use your holding up your hands like a rope-dancer trying to keep his balance; for if you knew how I have been insulted, abused, reviled, rejected, you would say it was innocent revenge, which will cost my enemies no money and me no concern."

"On this point as you like, then, Mr. Douglass; but I suppose you intend to return and look after your furniture, and to dispose of the lease of your house? Take care, with all your luck, you don't fall into a lawsuit,—that's the worst suit any man can wear."

"Well, if I do, Mr. Verity, I shall fall into honourable hands, for I must employ you," replied Douglass.

"The less chance you will have of gaining the day then," continued the solicitor. "If you want to defend an action at common law, go to Furnival's Inn, and hunt up the readiest rogue of the batch. But I will take care of you in this respect, at least concerning your house."

"Here's the supper," said Douglass; "and here's Mary laughing and chuckling like a young magpie. Come, spread it out, my lass;—here, take the keys and rummage the cellar,—don't be shy, hand up all you can find—I fancy there is not enough to make a lady drunk.—And now, Mr. Verity, for your account of the last moments of Mr. Benjamin Houghton. You know, of course, that I only saw him for four days in my life, and that under peculiar circumstances; so that if I do appear rather in high spirits at my good fortune, I am sure you will do me the credit to absolve me from all hypocrisy. If I were to begin and cry and sigh, to rend my heart and tear my garments,—or, as was done by an ancient people, root out my hair,—why, you would believe me to be a snivelling fellow in whom no confidence could be placed. I liked old Benjamin, both himself and his upper garment of the same name; he might have lived longer, and I should not have repined,—he might have returned to my humble dwelling and been welcomed: but since it has pleased God to take him, and pleased him to leave me some of his money, why I am sorry he is gone if he wished to live, but glad as to the result. And so I make a clean confession to my legal adviser."

"Spoken out boldly, like a conscientious evidence which it is no use cross-examining," replied Verity: "I can enter into your feelings. The poor old gentleman, after he left you in November last, returned to town and made a new will. He remained only long enough for the document to be prepared and signed: he put it into my hands and said, 'I have always respected you for your candour and your honesty: I leave this with you,—no soul breathing is aware of its contents but yourself; it will therefore rest with you to act up to the spirit of the dead. Now, good-b'ye! you will never see me again, for I feel I have not long to live: however, if I do send for you, mind and be active in obeying the summons." He left me almost directly, and took a house in Cheltenham, where he was remarked, as he appears to have been in this village, more from his disregard to dress than for the charity he bestowed with liberal hands—although with servants he was parsimonious in the extreme; his food was simple, and in those niggardly habits

which he had practised in his youth, he very nearly starved his own nurse. Last Thursday I received a two penny-post note from him, dated Carmarthen Street, and desiring me to come instantly. I obeyed, and found my old client upon a bed from which I saw at once that he never would move without the undertaker's men. The apothecary, who was of no practice, and who was just clever enough to perceive that his patient was about to leave him, recommended calling in a physician; but Mr. Houghton strenuously objected to throwing away money upon so bad a subject as himself. I arrived in the middle of the argument; I instantly despatched a boy for Dr. Baillie, who fortunately was at home. Directly he visited the patient, he gave him a general release, as he saw he could not arrest the progress of the case;—in fact, it was evident that an action had been declared against him, and he had entered an appearance."

"Not by attorney, Mr. Verity?"

"No, thank God! not just yet. However, he rallied a little, and sending every one out of the room but myself, he recapitulated the outline of Louisa's fall owing to his son, and then gave a brief picture of your open pew and doors. He called upon me to be your guide as I had been his; and then giving me a hint that my fee would have been quite enough for the doctor, he directed me to have no fuss and nonsense about parading his carcass for a field-day, but to pop it into a long wooden case, and send it down by the van to Longdale House, to be buried under a small mound which is in an open spot in the wood, not far from a small spring of water. I have conformed with all his wishes excepting the last, and I will consult you upon it to-morrow in our way to town. When he had done, he asked for some wine and water. We were obliged to send out for it, for he had not a drop in the house. Before it came he was much worse, and could not drink, I therefore wetted a rag, and squeezed it into his mouth, and continued this, as it appeared to give him some relief, until two in the morning, when the rattle of death announced the delivery of judgment. Before, however, the light was extinguished for ever, he sat upright in his bed, and with a kind of lightning before death, he glanced his eyes round the room, and saying, 'Where is Harry?—where is my son, my poor forgiven son!' he fell back and died. It was to me, who make money, and who spend it rather freely, a wonder that a man of his property could have contented himself with such a lodging—excepting that no one would have suspected him of being the man he was; and thus he passed on without ob-

servation until his last moments; the apothecary believing him to be almost a pauper;—and the good old woman who nursed him was much of the same opinion; he had hired her at ten shillings the month, and had paid a fortnight in advance. I believe the old female thought I wanted a nurse, when I gave her a ten-pound note for the trouble she had had, and the kind feeling she had manifested. Now, sir, as the time draws on, and we have sufficient to do for to-morrow, here is to your health and wealth: may you spend it honourably, and go down to your grave at a good old age, respected by the poor of Longdale House, which estate, besides the 70,000*l.* is yours, and left free of all incumbrances, or of settlements. He once thought of making you take his name; but he considered that some of the slander which had been affixed to his son might by mistake be given to you, and thus hurt your prosperity. So now, sir, having broken the ice of our acquaintance, I shall betake myself to bed, and hope that to-morrow before ten we shall be quite ready to start for London."

"Good night, Mr. Verity," said Robert; "you have been the only harbinger of good news I have ever had through my unfortunate existence. May you sleep soundly, having done your duty conscientiously and well. I shall not trouble the poppy god much, I feel, but I will not detain you." And away went Verity, preceded by Mary, who had dressed herself out in her best, in order to show her participation in her master's good fortune.

Now came reflection; and as Douglass stretched himself out upon the bed which for two years had borne his weight, he began to sum up his day's doings, as the old gentleman told him a famous English judge always did. He had never thought of Margaret, excepting in that sudden ebullition when in reality he thought of sharing his fortune with her. She had refused him as a pauper, she had discredited him, she had even laughed at him: now, he had the means of revenge; but that was a mean cowardly spirit, and he did not entertain it a moment. But very different did he feel from being the humble man he had been. Margaret's age, he found, was too near his own—he had always considered twelve years as necessary; he knew by experience that a parity of age never conduces to happiness he knew well the difference between a man and a woman at forty-five;—still, he liked the Ansons, and he began to harbour a slight affection for Julia, who was then only sixteen, and who promised to be as fine a woman as her sister, without being so

much spoiled or so selfish. Then he wandered away to Paris and to Rome; and after a night through, in which he dozed but never slept, he was aroused by Mary at seven o'clock, and went through, for the last time for many years, the drudgery of being his own servant. He was down, dressed and ready, by eight o'clock. He presented Mary with ten pounds, by way of beginning; he gave instructions as to the house, and took good care to let his little tattling maid know his good fortune; then telling her that if when Mr. Verity was ready for breakfast he had not returned, she would find him somewhere about the Ansons' gate.

It happened that as he approached the gate he met a gang of strolling gipsies; and being accosted by a rather pretty girl of the tribe, who was solicitous to tell his fortune, he stopped close to the cottage, and giving a shilling to have his palm crossed with the silver, the little black-eyed girl thus enacted prophet, after first asking him if he gave it with a good will and generous heart: "Ah, sir," she began, "many's the long mile you have travelled, and many's the more you have got to go;—it is not a journey you are going to take directly that I count, but miles and miles away, away. You have had many crosses and mishaps, but now you are rich and happy; but the day will come when you will remember the poor gipsy girl, when you will not be so wealthy as you shall be this day: it's fortune that will ruin you. There's many a fair one will seek to win you; but the one you once loved, you will never marry; and though she is not far off, yet your bride is nearer: it's all as fixed as fate—the girl you would have married yesterday this day is not for you." She finished, and walked on towards the village, leaving Douglass most superstitiously pondering over the truth of this guess-girl, when, giving a deep sigh and turning round, he saw Julia standing by the gate watching him. Rumours of wealth had gone before him, and as he advanced to shake her little hand, Margaret asked him to come in and breakfast. He pleaded the presence of his solicitor, and scarcely heeded the congratulations of Mrs. Anson, whose head was now exhibited, and who seconded the invitation; but at that moment he saw Mary, and waving his hand as he offered to carry any parcel to town for them, he turned round, and was soon at home.

Robert began to think the gipsy was right on every point, for on many he knew her to be so. To be sure, he knew that every man who was not tied by the leg either to a counter or a

shop-board must travel a good deal ; and as for love, what would a gipsy girl's prophecy be without a spice of that ?—every man must fall in love, or fancy himself to be so. In short, he turned it all over in his mind, and came to this conclusion : that if he was to be ruined after all, and know poverty and be acquainted with the poor, he might as well have some fun for his money ; and as to his yesterday's love, he had already eased himself of that, or all the solicitors in the world would never have kept him from Margaret.

CHAPTER XII.

At ten o'clock Mr. Verity and Douglass left the residence of the latter and proceeded to London. Robert felt a degree of pleasure unknown to him before when he observed several of his old maiden friends watching his departure; he waved a most patronising bow, and he imagined how severely they must have regretted the trifling civility of opening a pew-door. It was resolved during the journey that the old benefactor should be buried in a decent manner, without any fuss or parade, in the spot he had selected: they broke down his directions in regard to the van by making a hearse into that conveyance. They had little time to make arrangements, for it was agreed that Mr. Verity should accompany Robert, preceding the corpse, to put him in possession, and likewise to arrange all the preliminary necessaries. Douglass took care to have a regular vault made, and ordered a most splendid monument—one not unlike that celebrated mark of affection planned by the present king over the late queen of Prussia.

In the mean time, the vanity of human nature began to embitter the moments of Robert's life. When he first saw Longdale, he saw a paradise. It was beautifully situated on a gentle rising ground; the long, even shaved lawn finishing at the bank of a large lake of water; beyond this was a thick wood, which flanked the eastern side of the house, protecting it from the cold winds of that quarter; whilst on the left was one of the most splendid views in the county of Kent. The house was spacious, but too elegantly furnished: Robert was afraid to move his own chairs for fear of spoiling their splendour. Every room was in excellent preservation; and the old housekeeper who welcomed him to this godsend declared that ever since Mr. Houghton had visited it, which was six weeks previous to this day, she had, in obedience to his orders, been busily employed in preparing the house for its new master. This estate comprised one thousand acres in a ring fence, and was advantageously farmed out, producing a very respectable income,—for at that time agricultural distress was not the cry of the whole nation. The fact was,

the property had been so well managed between Mr. Verity and the housekeeper, that Robert thought he could not leave it in better hands, more especially as he had been a witness to the honesty and the attention of both. He took good care to *know* that every requisite for a family was in the house: he visited the cellars, and saw the *tenants at will* therein; they were closely packed, and had very dignified titles appended to their habitations. He received the congratulations of the people who lived near him; but he was pleased—much pleased, when he heard that the family from which Harry Houghton had selected his wife had long since left the neighbourhood, as the very name of Longdale rang like the last curse of old Houghton in the ears of his dying daughter-in-law upon the good old father of that excellent family.

The day of the funeral arrived, and the hearse made its dusty appearance. Robert saw the coffin of Benjamin Houghton placed in the vault; he heard the service of the dead in solemn accents read over him, he threw some dust himself upon his grave, and he became the full and only possessor of the soil—for he who owned it was become a part of it. He gave some directions as to rendering the monument, when it should be finished, an object worthy to meet the eye; and after sleeping that night at Longdale, accompanied Verity to town in order to settle his affairs before he began to put his schemes into operation. His first wish was to see Louisa Stanhope, now Louisa Walton. She attended at Verity's, in order to sign the release with her husband, and Robert could not but admire the regularity of her beauty: she was now only twenty-five, and a finer woman could not be seen in the metropolis. When Robert was first introduced to her, she led him aside from the desk and the parchments, and said, "You know my history, I am informed;" and the large tears filled her beautiful eyes. She was in deep mourning, and spoke in terms of the warmest gratitude of old Mr. Houghton, but she never once alluded to Harry. Robert could not help inquiring for Cavendish, and learned that he had lately been engaged in some swindling transaction, and had left the country, having twice or thrice solicited charity from the very being he had so often endeavoured to render a common prostitute on the town. That excellent creature relieved him; for although fallen in the estimation of Virtue, and justly fallen, yet we cannot but admire the fortitude of one who still maintained the dignity of her former station, and who did not allow

the frowns of the world to render her heart callous to the call of mercy.

Amongst other acquaintances that he made, Charles Stanhope was one. He was a soldier by profession,—not from choice, but necessity: his other brothers had engrossed all the interest the father held in church preferment, and he had been driven to the sword for an occupation and employment. Charles was one of those very few men we sometimes meet who regulate every idea by the strict standard of honour: he carried it beyond what was requisite; for if we are told we are not to "be righteous overmuch" in religion, so we may say, "Be not honourable overmuch in society." There are always one or two white lies which are absolutely necessary; but Charles would not tell a white lie to please either his colonel or his king. He was one who had profited by example, and often said that he considered the whole career of Harry to have been influenced by the falsehood he told his father when he promised not to see his wife for two years,—it was God's judgment for the untruth. To Charles Stanhope, who received a handsome legacy, Robert became much attached; and in order to let him see the rise of his fortune, Robert engaged him to visit him at his old abode in the village—to sit in the pew where the old gentlemen sat, to sleep in his bed, and to share some of the good things he was now enabled to offer from the unexpected liberality of Mr. Houghton. In the mean time he made various purchases, and sent down some of the good things of this life. Mary circulated the report that Mr. Douglass was about to return; and the gossips of the village imagining from this circumstance that his good fortune had been overrated, already began to term the fortune "a trifling legacy."

At the cottage one of those little scenes so common in life occurred the morning Robert left the village. Julia, who though so young that passion could not inspire a feeling, yet felt a comfortable glow and an uncomfortable blush when she mentioned to the assembled family the whole predictions of the gipsy. Mrs. Anson checked her folly, and comforted Margaret, who only thought of uniting herself with a man of wealth, by the assurance that no gipsy tale could alter his love; that if the roots were in the heart, none of the yellow tribe—not even the Bohemian sovereign—could drive it out of the head; and knowing the natural coldness of Margaret, she began to work upon her avarice more than upon her feelings.

"Nonsense, Julia, my dear!" said Mrs. Anson. "Robert

has already declared his passion for Margaret; and now that he has a sufficiency, all obstacles will be removed—his first wish will be to throw himself and his money at Margaret's feet, and I advise her to pick both up. You know, my dear Margaret, that discretion, *not* dislike, prompted your refusal."

"I dare say he would do as well as another, mamma; and I suppose we shall live in London. I really long to leave this wretched dull hole, and see something more of the world. Besides, you can all come and stay with us, excepting Julia, and she is too young to be *out* yet."

"I have got the gipsy's prophecy," said the little Julia, blushing; "and I shall go to town, you may rely upon it, Margaret: you cannot be jealous of my beauty or influence."

"A prophecy?" interrupted Margaret: "girls of sixteen had better think of their governess than of their future husbands. Why, you don't think that he would marry you?"

"If he asks me," replied the open-hearted Julia, "I shall have him; for he is a kind man, and never yet said a harsh word to me. But I wonder if he has gone to town, and if he will return?"

"They say that he has got 50,000*l.* from that old man who visited him three months since, and that he was not his father," continued Margaret; "so that he has not been sailing, as Mr. Gammon the attorney said, under false colours—although he changed his very often when I taxed him with it. I really wish I had never run away when he made his declaration of love: but to think of marrying a man who had 150*l.* a year was too absurd, and to rust and rot in this miserable village was quite preposterous."

"I should not wonder," replied Julia, "if your cool manner does not cool him. He offered himself when he had nothing but himself to offer, and you refused him: now, if you accept him, it must be obvious even to a lover, that his money, and not the man, was the bait."

"Suppose, Julia," replied Margaret, "you mind your own business. I tell you it is quite indifferent to me whom I marry; but now I am determined to have Robert, for I have no idea of younger sisters interfering in such concerns."

"Julia, my dear," said Mrs. Anson, "go to Miss Boreum and practise your piano. I wonder how the word love ever got into your head!"

"Why, mamma, I had my fortune told by the gipsy: and she said she knew I was in love; and she described Robert so well,

that I think I shall take compassion upon him, since Margaret only likes his money. But I won't quarrel with my pretty sister about him; and if he speaks to you first, you may have him, on conditions that I am to be one of the bridesmaids. So now we are agreed, give me a kiss, and I will go to my studies. I wonder when I shall have done with Miss Boreum and be *out;* for although I like her as much as a girl can like her governess, yet I confess I should rejoice to be independent."

"Do go, Julia!" said Mrs. Anson: "how your tongue does run riot!—one would think the gipsy girl had told you you were to find a fortune, and that she had been a true prophet."

"Oh, mamma, I remember what she said: I shall find a fortune and a husband too."

Robert had bought a carriage, one handsome and convenient; and in it he placed Charles and himself, whilst in the rumble the servant, a personage of much pretension both in looks and accomplishments, occupied his seat. He had only a pair of horses, but the equipage was one which would have created a sensation in any village.

"I am now, Charles," he said as they drove away from the hotel in London, "about to make you a confidant in my history. I shall have the pleasure to-night to introduce you to one of the handsomest women in England, with whom I candidly confess I *was* much in love. It is now scarcely a month ago, and the day previous to Mr. Verity's information of my good fortune, that I made her a proposition of marriage; and she not only refused me, but refused me coldly: she actually laughed at me, and conveyed the ungracious negative with a want of feeling which shocked me,—nay, it was an implied scorn. I left the village the day after Verity's visit, having spent the evening with the family, and from the mother heard a confirmation of the sentence declared against me. It was near midnight when Verity arrived and I became an affluent man. I shall have no secrets from you; and I tell you that, in spite of all my good fortune, the contempt with which I was treated by this beautiful statue has made me dread to meet her. I know that on our arrival we shall be asked to dinner there, and I want your advice as to the propriety of accepting it."

"Do you intend," asked Stanhope, "to resume your intimacy with the family, so as to leave them to suppose that you still harboured a love which her breath might send to sea?"

"Most certainly not," replied Robert: "my intention in this little excursion is to show you how and where I was living, to

make you sit in the fortunate pew, to bid farewell to all my neighbours, and to express to Mrs. Anson my warmest thanks for her former hospitality."

"An honourable embassy, in which I shall be your secretary," said Charles; "and then—"

"Then my intention is to take a Continental tour with some such good fellow as yourself; or, if you feel inclined—for we have both seen France and Italy,—to steer across the Atlantic and visit Jonathan, I am your companion for as long as you can obtain leave of absence."

"That would suit my inclination and my desires well," replied Charles; "but you must not force me into extravagances or render me insignificant by your wealth."

"I feel that to be impossible," replied Douglass; "your *sterling* qualities are more valuable than my money; but I promise to place my expenditure at the ratio you yourself shall fix, and thus then we agree to visit Jonathan in his own state."

"In one of them at any rate," replied Stanhope. "What place is this we are coming to?—a man that could live here must be one tired of the world, and——"

"Turn to the right, boy, at the Elephant and Dormouse, and stop at the first white house on the left-hand side. Come, drive us up sharply."

Smack went the whip; the wheels whisked round with increased velocity; out of every window pop came a head to see the carriage. Douglass sat back with becoming retirement as the vehicle quickly passed the Elephant, turned to the right, and stopped opposite the door. An hostler from the inn ran to offer fresh horses; and as Robert was rather the better in appearance for a London tailor's decorations, when he stepped from the carriage, the lout exclaimed: "Why here's he be again, and as bright as a new penny!"

The carriage was sent to the inn, and Robert ushered Stanhope into his little parlour. "Here it was," he said, "that old Houghton told me his misfortunes: here's the humble table which was spread to welcome him, and in this little cabin did he feel more comfort than he had known for years." The London gentleman's valet turned up his nose at the small habitation, and gave Mary a look of contempt, as much as to say, "Country vermin!"

Douglass was right in his conjecture. Before he had time to give directions to Mary as to dinner, a note, written in Margaret's hand, was delivered to him. It forestalled him in every

way, for it mentioned that they knew he had not ordered dinner, and that a companion accompanied him. Both were invited, and both accepted. The note began "My dear Robert," and she was very truly his even to the end.

Stanhope remarked the beginning and the end, and was about to make some objection to the acceptance, when Douglass told him he had always been called Robert, and had received dozens of notes in the same style. In the mean time the church bells began making the most infernal noise; the tradesmen, whom Douglass had punctually paid, came to announce their gratitude for former custom, and to solicit a continuation of the same; and when he walked out, he was surrounded by candidates for service and for charity.

"This is flattering, Robert, at any rate. You seem to have steered a steady course whilst you lived here; and amongst the many who have bowed and congratulated you, not one has brought up one of those unpleasant reminiscences in the shape of a small account accidentally forgotten, and only presented as it might have escaped your memory."

"Thank God," he replied, "it is with some pride that I can lay my hand to my heart and declare that I never owed a farthing in my life. I had but little, and within that little I managed to live. But here is the cottage; let us pay a visit before dinner: and I warn you, before you enter, to place a good barrier before your heart."

"Never fear," said Charles; "the captain of a walking regiment has too many boots to buy, to take a wife; and besides, her eyes will be upon *you;* where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. By Jove! it is a comfortable place though, and fancifully decorated."

"Yes, and the inside has more beauties, and natural ones, than the exterior. Mrs. Anson, this is my friend Mr. Stanhope; and we both intend ourselves the pleasure of dining here today."

Mrs. Anson bowed and was most happy. The door opened, and Margaret entered. A flush came over the face of Charles; and as Douglass shook hands with her, and presented her to his friend as the flower of England, he thought he never saw Stanhope look so confoundedly foolish in his life. He stammered and stuttered something about beauty and justice, and made such a jumble of a hotchpotch, that Robert thought he should have laughed outright. Then Julia came running in with all the joy and the sincerity of youth, and taking Douglass's hand, said with

a smile, "My congratulations, although last, are not the less sincere."

"You are rather in error there, my dear Julia," replied Robert, "for you are the first to congratulate me; and in return, I will present you to my best friend, Mr. Stanhope. Here, Charles," he said, "here is my little favourite"—a blush came over her cheek,—"as nice a young lady as heart ever warmed, and who intends to rival her sister's beauty."

"That's *impossible*," replied Charles; but recollecting the bad compliment it was to Julia, he managed to bungle out of the unhappy speech by saying, "that although the promises were good, yet that no mother could be so blessed." Then came divers congratulations, many inquiries into the unexpected windfall. From Margaret, however, came this remark: "that she was glad to see Robert so prosperous, and flattered to find he still remembered his best friends at the cottage."

There could be no mistaking this: it was an evident signal that hostilities had ceased, and an amity had begun. But Robert knew not why it was, for Margaret was beautiful as ever, that he distrusted this apparently honest friendship. He had watched her behaviour, and had observed that although she made those false advances to him, her real attack seemed diverted towards Stanhope. Her disposition to flirt and to conquer was too evident: she considered Robert as hers, and now she wished to entice Stanhope into her snares.

Any woman might have admired Stanhope: He was of a good height, rather a dark complexion, with brilliant eyes; his features being well formed—nay, handsome. He wore on his countenance the honesty, the integrity of his heart. He spoke, excepting when Margaret was the theme, like the straightforward soldier he was. To a good classical education he had added the accomplishments gained by travelling; and whilst he stood firmly as an English soldier, he could turn the lighter words of compliment, or fascinate by the melody of his voice. It was quite evident to any casual beholder that Stanhope was captured without firing a shot, and that Margaret only sought the prize in order to swell the list of her triumphs.

Their return to the humble home in order to make the necessary preparations for dinner was not imterrupted by any lover-like fits or starts. Charles was silent, and apparently questioning his own heart; Robert kept his eye fixed upon him, and the only words which were spoken were by the latter, who asked "when Charles would be ready to sail to America?"

Charles looked at the questioner, and could not refrain from a smile.

If poverty makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows, unexpected riches bring many a nominal friend. Robert found on his table, although he had not arrived an hour, invitations from half the parish. Those who shunned him before were anxious for his acquaintance now. The carriage had been passed in review by half the community; the servant had been bored to death by inquiries. He happened to mention the beauty of Longdale house, and he placed in the hands, or rather the mouths of his tormentors, a series of questions to which he was destined to answer. He was asked why his master came—when he returned—how much he had received—who left it;—in short, every thing relative to him, past, present, or future, was seized by the dexterous ingenuity of the wondering women.

They were dressed and ready to start to the cottage—when Stanhope, taking Douglass by the arm, said: "One word in confidence, Robert. Be candid with me: have you any serious intentions as regards Margaret. Tell me, I entreat you, the truth."

"On my honour, Charles, I have not the least intention of resuming my former situation of her lover," replied Douglass. "Her admirer, as far as her beauty goes, I am still; but I will pledge you my honour that I will never make *her* another proposition."

"Then I am more easy," replied Stanhope; "for I own to you that I feel myself led captive already: I never saw so splendid a jewel before."

"Oh, oh!" said Douglass, "you will feel differently when we are in America."

"To America I don't go, Robert, until that girl is Margaret Stanhope, or I a lost man."

"There's many a lost man found in America," replied Douglass with a smile.

At dinner they were placed according to their own desires. The mamma and the two daughters were separated by the clergyman and themselves. The reverend divine paid great attention to Mrs. Anson; Charles made a most vigorous assault upon Margaret; whilst Robert by soft endearment gradually sapped the breastworks of Julia's heart. Never were three men so placed exactly to their wishes, and perhaps never were three women more agreeable. They made no noisy chorus, no open-mouthed hullabaloo; but they spoke lowly in duets, or sighed

in *solos*. After dinner, whilst the clergyman and Mrs. Anson were engaged at backgammon, Julia and Douglass tried chess, and Charles sung to the accompaniment of Margaret. It was Saturday night, and it was close upon Sunday morning before they reached home. Before they departed, they were engaged for the morrow.

"Well," said Charles, as he drew his chair to the table and filled a glass of champagne, (for Douglass had taken care to have all good things sent down,) "my flint is fixed; I am, thank God, independent, and I do not leave this village until I know if I am to be married or not. As for the soldier's coat, that is none the worse for a woman's care; as for the musket——"

"You had better *discharge* that," interrupted Robert, "or you may be sent off like a shot yourself. Margaret will never dangle after a walking captain; and you had better change your flint for a cap, or perhaps she will set hers for you."

"That would discharge me more readily than her words," replied Stanhope. "But tell me, Robert, your plain undisguised opinion of her: do not extenuate, or set aught down in malice."

"My judgment, as Mr. Verity would say," answered Douglass, "is summed up from my own notes. In the first place, all evidence is in favour of her beauty: we therefore give her the full benefit of that redeeming virtue. She is a cold beauty, a kind of Lot's wife, not satisfied with her lot—without any of the *salt* of accomplishments, though, like *Peter*, a catcher of men."

"A very pretty picture!" ejaculated Charles.

"Just so," retorted Robert; "a very pretty picture, set in a very pretty frame. However, I am bound to say, she never, that I knew, painted herself."

"The bell-ringers, sir," said John, as he entered, "send their compliments, and hope you will be kind enough to remember them."

"Here, give them this guinea," said Douglass, "and tell them, I hope they will never ring the changes for me again, excepting when another *belle* goes nearer the altar than the steeple."

"Why, Robert, you are, notwithstanding your mourning, pretty gay this evening."

"I say, Charles, did you see me playing at chess?"

"I saw you moving the men," replied his companion.

"So I did, and I found a mate. Although it is scarcely a month since I proposed to Margaret, yet I gave Julia a hint,

that we talked of knights and bishops in such a brisk running of words that we never came to a check."

"Poor little soul!" replied Stanhope; "only sixteen! Why, you must hire a nurse for her."

"All in good time, my dear fellow," replied Douglass, whose spirits were high enough without any artificial aid. "Don't be alarmed; we shall require them, I dare say. And now for an *exposé* on my part: I will marry Julia, or I'll—"

"Go to America," said Charles; "and I will have Margaret, and be your brother."

They warmed over this conversation; but the Sabbath had begun, and Robert remembered the lesson of *example* which old Houghton had given him.

CHAPTER XIII.

There is something beautifully solemn during the Sabbath in the country—it appears in reality a day of rest; and often may the labourer have stood on a rising ground near Mereworth, looking over the beauty of Yotes, and wondering at the stillness of heaven. The bell which summons to prayer threw its deep tone over the valley; but the cattle seemed hushed—the air was still, not a leaf moved, and nature itself was relaxed from its labours and resting on the seventh day. That day brings with it rest to the weary and repose to the active; it gives a stimulus to exertion; it makes the guilty afraid, and the good satisfied. And if that silence, that repose, is broken when the prayers of the Sabbath are over, and innocent recreation triumphs over idle inaction, is this wholesome restoration to be called a sin, and should bigoted legislators rise to crush the harmless pastime? Away with such inconsistency—such tyranny! You will allow the labourer to smoke, to drink, to assemble together—you hold out a premium upon drunkenness, and you repress the very innocent amusement which would wean them from a villanous expenditure of their hard-earned wages, and rid them of the surest enemy to health and contentment known since the days of Noah.

Robert entered the church with a firm step, and a firmer resolution, to offer up his most sincere thanksgivings for his power to do good, and earnestly to implore the Divine assistance to employ his means for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. He felt shocked at the idle curiosity which prompted all his former acquaintances to watch his manner and to scan his companion. He led Stanhope to his pew; and if he had required an example to pray, that excellent man would have served him as a model: his was fervent prayer; his eyes never wandered even to her he most loved, but his responses were low and impressive. It occurred to Robert that he had never seen a man more solemn in the house of prayer, or more cheerful and contented out of it. Mr. Maxwell preached; and no sooner was his text given, than Douglass was again the public gaze of the congregation: even

Stanhope touched him with his knee, and Robert felt like a sinner about to receive a rebuke as the preacher the second time repeated the words of his text,—"For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them."

The discourse, ably written, eloquently preached, touched Douglass in the right place. Once Mr. Maxwell in plain words alluded to him, and implored him to turn the resources now in his power, not to idle dissipation, but to the relief of the indigent: he spoke of those "who gave to the poor, lending to the Lord," and he warned him to lay up riches in heaven. It was not without a secret pang that Douglass listened with all attention to that excellent man's advice; and when his book was closed, he most solemnly prayed to put his words into execution. As Stanhope left the church to make his bow and join the Ansons, Douglass remained in his pew and baffled curiosity: for it was not until the clergyman had withdrawn to the vestry, that he rose, and, to the wonder of those who hunt after novelties, followed Mr. Maxwell to his retreat. The rector seemed rather astonished at his entrance; but when he took his hand and thanked him for his excellent advice, he saw a glow of satisfaction pass over his countenance.

"I know," said Robert, "my dear sir, how vainly in this life we propose to act,—the disposition is above: but I am anxious to show you that I had partially forestalled your sermon, You know how slender have been my means of doing good, and you know that for four years I have resided near you, unable,—positively unable to contribute much towards the relief of the poor. That is now passed, and I hasten to avail myself of this first opportunity to contribute something to the alleviation of the distresses of my fellow-parishioners. Allow me to place this cheque in your hand, to be distributed in any manner and to whatever objects you may think deserving.—Good morning: we meet, I believe, at six." And Robert was soon with the Ansons, who had awaited his coming.

"You don't want a second," said Charles with a smile on his countenance, "do you? Clergymen are privileged people, and we must avail ourselves of their advice without feeling hurt."

"Kindly considered, my dear Stanhope: perhaps I may want you to carry a message to him before long; but at present he and myself are on very good terms, I assure you."

Those little civilities which mark the charm of civilised life

passed between them as they walked home; Stanhope keeping close to Margaret, who seemed to have fancied his society more than Robert believed the marble statue could have done, whilst he himself steadily fixed his attentions upon Julia; and although Mrs. Anson did occasionally manœuvre so as to place them in other positions, yet they were mutually attracted, and a mother might have seen that their eyes met more frequently than those of casual and cold visiters.

It is said that love is a plant which grows directly from the heart, winding its roots round the centre of life, and endangering its existence when it is suddenly torn away. "It cannot come from the head," says Hood, in his "Tylney Hall;" but, with all due deference to that talented and witty author, some men hold him to be mistaken. Love is more generally grown in the head, and ultimately takes root in the heart. The gipsy's rubbish had first given the slip of this precious flower to Julia, and Robert soon transplanted it to a warmer region. In the meantime, Stanhope was gradually, as he thought, progressing: he had got to "shaking hands," "making eyes," and many other of the early resting-places of incipient affection.

They had been a week, and then a fortnight, and ultimately a month, residing in a village out of which Douglass would three months previous have paid half his little store to have got. He had rather gained ground from the trumpet-tongued praise of Mr. Maxwell, who extolled the liberality of his parochial donation, which was 200*l.*, into the munificent offering of a prince. It now became evident that both Stanhope and Douglass were bound to make a declaration of their sentiments; and as they talked over that important point, they came to the resolution of making their hand-offerings on the following day, each lecturing the other.

"Depend upon it," said Robert, "you have mistaken Margaret. "Had she heard that your sister had given you 20,000*l.* of her money, the case might be different; but as she believes you not worth one straw beyond your pay, you will find that she is indifferent to your person, although proud of the conquest."

"And you, my dear Robert," replied Charles, "will find that Julia does not know the feeling of love. She is too young; and notwithstanding your wealth, the mother will never consent to the sacrifice of her daughter's health by allowing her to marry when only sixteen."

"There you are wrong, Charles, believe me," replied Douglass;

"for a mother seldom weighs all the may-be results of a match when 70,000*l.* and Longdale House are in the scale."

"I cannot have so poor an opinion," retorted Charles, "of human nature, as to believe that any parent thinks of money when her daughter's health is concerned."

"Then, my dear fellow, you are in a happy state of ignorance as to match-making," replied Robert.

The morning came, and noon saw them at the cottage resolved to sell their freedoms. Robert felt certain of success, for he had watched the constant struggle between love and propriety; he had seen those little sparkling eyes constantly fixed upon him, and he knew quite enough of the world and of the innocence of Julia to know that her eyes only beamed with the true sentiments of her heart; but he confessed he had his misgivings as to the result of his friend's proposition, for he had been rejected there himself under similar circumstances, and Stanhope, who was willing to be loved only for himself, had bound Douglass to a strict promise not to betray his fortune. He himself never hinted one word about his money or his expectations, but kept a guarded silence in respect to both.

It was May, the latter end of it; all the flowers of the spring were in their glorious liveries, and Nature was rejoicing in her beauty. The walks, shaded by occasional lilacs and laburnums, looked enticing for lovers who like solitude, and Douglass and Julia were soon seated on a rustic chair in a bower perfumed by the beautiful odour of the former flower. Robert held Julia's hand, and tenderly regarded her lovely face. There was an intense glow of languid feeling, and her eyes seemed swollen with unusual moisture: there were no tears, but the tremour of love had reached her heart. They sat with eyes fixed on each other, and the tongues of both seemed debarred the power of utterance. At length Douglass said, as he gently pressed her hand,—

"My own, my dearest Julia! let me seize this moment to confess by words what you must have often seen and known by my manner.—Tell me, then, if the love I feel has found its echo in your heart. Nay, dearest Julia! do not weep, or turn away that flushed but charming face; tell me, my angel, if I am to be so blessed,—that in throwing myself and my fortune at your feet, I may venture to hope your love for me is equal to mine, and that days of happiness are yet in store for me."

She did not answer, but there was an acquiescence in her silence—she did not withdraw her hand as Robert gently pressed it to his heart; when a flood of tears had relieved her

from her maiden coyness, she turned towards him, and in a voice scarcely audible, she returned the pressure of his hand and answered, "Robert."

'Twas done;—Robert felt his love returned; he knew her sincerity, there was nature in all her answers; no forced blushes, no accidental tears, but the pure emanation from a heart now confessedly his.

There are moments of life worth preserving in ideal spirits, if to time we could give corporeal substance, and embalm it with the fragrance of oriental perfumes. These moments are few; and perhaps, throughout the long catalogue of imaginary pleasures with which the gloom of boyhood and manhood is enlightened, none can shadow forth such enjoyment, such perfect unadulterated happiness, as where pure love is offered and welcomed. We speak not of the cold, creeping tremour of appetite; we speak not of the pride of heart, when beauty is subdued and passion satisfied; but of that warm, generous feeling which would sacrifice life itself to the object it solicited. How long they enjoyed this rapture they knew not: the car of Time is said to move quickly over the verdant ground of pleasure, whilst pain lingers on the pace of the tortoise; swiftly flew the chariot of enjoyment, and as they talked of happiness to come, and formed plans of future felicity, the hours flew, and already the lengthening shadows of evening announced the necessity of their return.

Robert urged Julia to make an instant appeal to her mother, for well he knew the danger of teaching dissimulation to a parent. Can the husband expect fidelity, when he himself gives the lesson of deceit to his wife?—No. The man who sees in his partner the proper glow and affection of the daughter towards her parent, and that warmth of cordiality towards her sister, may fairly presume, that she who is a good daughter, a sincere sister, and a true friend, will in all human probability make a good wife. Julia was young, not seventeen, and these marks of filial attachment rendered the prospect more brilliant. Robert desired her to relate exactly his feelings, which he would afterwards confirm: "That although he was as great an admirer of Margaret's beauty as ever, still that he could not insult her by fostering the love she had desired him no longer to nourish; but that her beauty, Robert saw, was reflected in her sister's face, and that her young heart had accepted the bird driven from the abode it once thought to occupy.

Robert now quickly questioned Julia concerning the chance

of success in regard to Stanhope, who, he knew, would take a refusal to heart more seriously than Robert had done, for he had a balm of consolation the very evening administered by that most excellent Mercury, Verity; and although love is a very generous plant, money is no weed, and if any way related to the garden of Flora, it must be in the poppy, which occasions sweet slumbers and gives high spirits. Julia's apprehensions first gave Robert a warning of what he might expect, she having repeated to him the scene relative to the conversation which we have already mentioned. Again and again they exchanged their vows; he kissed her animated cheek, and at five o'clock left her at her own house. Robert inquired for Stanhope—the servant told him he had returned home some time since; he asked for Mrs. Anson—she was indisposed; he ventured to name Margaret—she was dressing for dinner. He therefore took his leave, telling Julia that he would return in the evening, and with hasty strides reached the door.

We have described Stanhope before—at least his mind. He was a man who had less of the world's shuffles and cuts than any other human being we ever met with: he was as brave as a lion, and with women as timid and reserved as a midshipman. Robert found him seated by the table, his head resting on his arms; and when he raised himself to meet him, his whole countenance betrayed the grief which he had so seriously experienced.

"Now, then, Charles," said Robert, for he was in high spirits,—"now then, my boy, as the sailors say, let's overhaul our log-books: let's see which has made best weather during the squalls. But you are looking sad enough: what's the matter, my boy?"

"I am eternally rendered miserable, Robert; I shall never be happy again."

"Then she has accepted you, Charles, and you repent already."

"No, no, indeed she has not, Robert; she has refused me nearly as coolly as she discarded you; and now hope is dead, for I never could bring myself to offer again.

"Take a glass of wine, Charles, and let's hear all about it: I can assist you, I can bring it all right,—but out with the story—let's hear it all," said Robert.

"Merely this, Robert:—When you went into the bower, I went into the fields. We strayed far away; and when I thought she could not run all the way home as she did with you, I at

once opened upon the subject, breaking ground gradually, and advancing by parallels to the very ditch before the battery ; and then I took her hand. I made no romantic speeches, but, like a soldier, and consequently like a man, I warmly confessed my feelings, my admiration of herself and her beauty. She gave no sudden start, no tears swelled her eyes. I held her hand—it was motionless; I pressed it—she returned it not ; and when in plain terms I told her of my love, she looked me unmoved in the face and smiled. I pressed her to consent to be mine ; she replied—"She had never thought upon the subject ; but that she *feared* she could not meet my wishes, as her mother had destined her for you."

"Do you love *Robert?*" I said—"nay, be candid, my dearest Margaret,—do you love him ?"

"No," she drawlingly replied : "I like him well enough ; but as to loving him, I don't *think* I do."

"You cannot conceive how I felt, I, with all my warmth of heart, to find myself so slighted after all my attention, after all my affection. And you, Robert ?"

"Me !—but hang it, Charles, you have not done ? Did you abandon the attack after skirmishing ?—after you had opened the breach, did you not assault ?"

"Oh yes, assault after assault, but I never placed a footstep upon the battery ; I was repulsed, beaten back—and not by any *warm* engagement, I assure you. Now, I am miserable. I make a feeble effort at wit, as men just before execution have been known to jest; but Robert, I am, I assure you, rendered unhappy for life. I love that woman warmly, fervently, and I cannot bear this cold, this unusual refusal—or rather, chilling apathy, for actual refusal she never condescended to give."

"Then live and hope, Charles," replied Robert. "Now, for myself, Julia is mine, and through her your success is sure. Come, cheer up ! After dinner I am going to the cottage to speak to Mrs. Anson. I expect some little surprise at my change of persons, and now I will wager any sum that no obstacles are thrown in the way,—for you I have a sure mode. But I do not see why you should not accompany me ; for although Margaret did not consent, she did not actually refuse. And as in love or friendship, which knows no cold medium, either you will be dancing up to the sky like a boy on a see-saw, or you will be levelled with the dust, so let us fortify ourselves with the generous champagne, and at eight we will again move our columns to the attack.—Dinner, John."

In vain Robert rallied Charles; he was as far below as Robert was above concert pitch, and consequently their sentiments kept but little harmony. Whilst Robert was buoyant with hope, and attributing to his own dear self what perhaps sisterly jealousy, envy, and money might have controlled, Charles still harped upon the same chord,—the cold, ungenerous manner of Margaret.

"I tell you what Charles," said Robert, "Margaret is no flirt—she is too ingenuous for that; but she is naturally cold, and, I was going to say, heartless. Many—nay, all who have seen, have admired her; but mark my words, if she escapes *you*, she will be like the lonely apple offered to the guests after dinner at Echmiadzan, which is smelt by all and tasted by none."*

"Ah," said Charles, with a smile which looked like the ghost of a laugh; "and if ever I marry, I will take care, out of pure revenge, to follow up the manner of the present Chaldeans, and mash my bride's feet to a mummy, in order to hold the supremacy for ever after."†

"Well said, my boy; and stamp more feeling in her feet than she has in her heart."

The evening came, and at eight o'clock Charles and Robert went to the cottage. They were admitted, but found only Mrs. Anson in the drawing-room. Robert advanced with all the confidence of a triumphant lover and a most dutiful son-in-law; but he was rather checked than encouraged by the guarded manner of the mother, who certainly did not bid him to rush into her arms, and become the prop and support of her growing age. She received Charles with a more condescending coolness, and they all three kept looking at each other like so many strange cats in a garret. At length Robert began by inquiring for the young ladies, and soon saw in which quarter the wind set, by receiving for answer, that the child (meaning Julia) had gone to bed, it being a bad plan to keep such late hours, then only nine o'clock, and that Margaret was not well;—in short, she said, "I fear Margaret walked too far to-day, for she appeared very much overcome when she returned."

During this conversation, Mrs. Anson occasionally glanced a rather repulsive look at Charles, who soon twisted it into a kind of death-warrant, and, with the readiness of a woman, discovered he had left his handkerchief at home, and taking his hat, walked off, intending to await the return of Robert, or to return if Robert remained long enough to give hope a chance.

* See Missionary Researches in Armenia. † Ibid.

He had no sooner quitted the room, than Mrs. Anson saved playing any prelude or conjuring up an overture by breaking at once into the grand opera thus:—

"I am more surprised, Mr. Douglass, than I can express, at what has taken place to-day; and I really feel that I should not either do credit to my daughter's feelings or my own, if I lost a moment in assuring you, that however much I may feel gratified at this second choice you have made, by which you prepared me for the honour you would confer upon my family, yet that I never could consent to Julia's marriage, at her tender age, to a man who has made the same avowal of affection to her elder sister. Neither can I hold out any hope to Mr. Stanhope, since the very reason that I formerly gave you, is applicable to himself. It is a duty a mother owes her daughters to see them if possible comfortably settled in life, and to guard them from insult. I shall not fail in the former, whatever I may have done in the latter."

"Really, Mrs. Anson," replied Robert, "I am at a loss how to comprehend you. Surely the declaration of affection is no insult, or the offer of a fortune a blow against being comfortably settled; but the course of affection and true love never yet ran without interruption, and I am fully prepared to meet with, and to overcome all obstacles, for my proposition is honourable, my love sincere."

"Indeed, Mr. Douglass!" replied Mrs. Anson; and how do you suppose Margaret must feel, who of course expected you would resume your attentions to her, and not have chosen as a rival her own sister, a very child, who would better become the nursery than the altar."

"It was," resumed Robert, "the idea that I had paid Miss Margaret the most marked attention, that I felt both my inclination and my honour prompt me to make the proposition I did. She laughed at me—she thus refused me; and you, my dear madam, added your approval of your daughter's conduct—you refused me. Why then should you have anticipated a renewal of that you yourself forbid? and how could I pay so bad a compliment to Margaret, as to offer myself again, when it would be evident that my wealth, not myself, would be accepted?"

"You should have been a solicitor, Mr. Douglass; and if you used your ingenuity, and your subtlety as well for your client as you have done for yourself, you would gain every cause."

"Then, madam," replied Douglass, "I may hope that my defence will gain my present *suit?*" Mrs. Anson shook her

head. "You say no; but I trust you will not object to listen to my explanation already given, and the evident insult I should offer to my friend and myself, if I were—for which I am not the least inclined—to shift my ground, and as the hunters say, try back again. No, Mrs. Anson; from the moment I received the cold refusal of Margaret, when she, as well as yourself suspected me of falsehood in regard to Mr. Houghton, and when you kindly—I must say most kindly, desired me to abandon all pursuit, I did so; I obeyed your orders to the very letter,—I struck her out from my heart; I allowed her no longer to occupy a thought, and I felt rising within me an attachment for Julia; I nourished it,—it grew and blossomed; it was offered and accepted—my hand and my fortune are hers. The folly of calling a woman of seventeen a child—an infant, is too glaring, and I know you only did it in order to give me time to make this explanation. No power on earth could ever draw me back to Margaret; my love is Julia's, and to her, whatever may be *your* present intention, *I intend* to devote myself——"

"And Margaret?" interrupted Mrs. Anson.

"—Will not feel the slightest emotion of bruised affection, since that could not have grown since my return; for I have cautiously devoted myself to Julia. I hope she explained to you the nature of our conversation—in fact, the offer of my hand, and her acceptance?"

"She has," replied Mrs. Anson, "and I chid her for her folly; but I see—" and here Mrs. Anson took me by the hand and continued smiling—"the gipsy *will* be right, and I need not oppose."

"Then that is settled, and I am to be your son," replied Douglass; "and here I offer my first duty to my parent." And as he kissed her face, he heard the door open; and before he had unwound his affectionate arms, the Rev. Mr. Marshall was there, gaping like an alligator catching flies.

"Ah, that indeed," he began, "I did not expect, or I would not have interrupted such *amiable weakness;*" and he glanced a look at Mrs. Anson which called up her blushes and recalled her youth and beauty.

"It shall be no secret to you, Mr. Marshall——"

"Oh, none at all," said the clergyman, "for I saw it."

"No, no!——"

"Ah, but I say, yes, yes! and, as the chancellor said, *I say, yes.*"

"Nonsense, Mr. Marshall."

"So I think, madam."

"I tell you, he only gave that kiss——"

"I'm not so sure of that, madam."

"—As an offering——"

"No doubt of it."

"—Which any man in his situation——"

"Most certainly."

"—Had a right to do."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, indeed! for he is to be my son-in-law."

Mr. Marshall's face puckered up to its usual goodness, and taking Douglass by the hand, said, "I congratulate you on your choice and Margaret on her good fortune."

Before they could clear up the mystery, Margaret entered, followed by Charles. "I congratulate you, my dear Margaret, with all my heart and soul," said this worthy rector: "you could not have made a more excellent choice, or have chosen one who, to judge both from his liberality and his candour, is likely to make you a good and affectionate husband." (Mrs. Anson had been pulling away at the reverend's coat-tail during the whole of this.) "Your mother wanted to tell you herself; but I am before her in the good work, and I congratulate you both, only requesting that I may finish what I have begun." So saying, he turned round, and without regarding who it was, for he had not seen Stanhope enter, he took his hand and placed it in Margaret's.

"There," said he, as he turned round to Mrs. Anson, "I have done it here, and will do it at church: I have joined their hands, and made them one by promise. I hardly know how, Mr. Douglass, to thank *you*," (he said this so marked that it confirmed Charles that no mistake could be made,) "for your princely munificence; and when *you* marry, many a heart will rejoice and be made merry."

Mrs. Anson, when the rector turned to Douglass, in order to avoid the *éclaircissement*, left the room; and both Margaret and Charles were fully convinced that a change had come over the spirit of the walk; Charles believing that Robert had effected it; and Margaret, giving way to her mother's choice, for she had none of her own, blushed slightly, and sat down near the piano.

Robert was quite aware of the consequence of the discovery; and as the only method of rendering it less painful to Charles, he proposed to withdraw and return home. But Stanhope was

in no mood to accept the offer: he, on the contrary, drew his chair close to Margaret's, and began some of those gentle, soft speeches to Margaret, whose hand he took, and which was not withdrawn. We are quite aware that our description of this lady may appear a little out of nature; but, as Byron says, "truth is much stranger than fiction." So in this case it is evident: Margaret lives at this moment apparently the gayest of the gay, and certainly one of the loveliest of creation.

"That is all as it should be, Mr. Douglass," said the rector: "'love me, love my dog.' I see Margaret admires your handsome friend; and you have such confidence in her, that you are not jealous."

"Not I, sir, I assure you," was the reply. "Charles may love Margaret as much as he likes, Margaret may return the compliment, without causing any jealousy in my breast; but, sir, one word;" and taking the rector into a corner, he whispered to him the whole state of the case, and urged him to support Charles's cause. "He is," Robert continued, "a most excellent man, although rather deficient in that which is by worldly people more considered than talent, temper, or merit."

"Then, sir, *you* are to marry Julia, after having proposed to Margaret?"

"Just so; and here she is, blushing and looking ashamed to meet the man who is to unite us. My own, my beautiful Julia! this is kind, after your fatigue, to solace me by your presence. Come and explain our mutual histories to Mr. Marshall, whilst I have Charles brought to book by Mrs. Anson, for I vow that match shall not go off for a few pounds."

"You have drawn a prize, Julia," said Mr. Marshall, "and let me counsel you how to keep him firmly, unalterably yours. This is a match I shall be proud to join; for if the temper of the woman and the character of the man would warrant a prophecy of felicity, my little Julia and my generous Robert are the most likely people to find it."

"Indeed, sir," said Mrs. Anson as she addressed Charles, "I cannot give my consent to this hasty marriage. You say Margaret *has* consented: if so, it must be under the mistake occasioned by Mr. Marshall. But in saying that I do not, cannot consent, understand me as conveying no slight upon yourself or your family. A parent's duty is her daughter's welfare; and certainly that would not be much enhanced by an alliance with one of your slender fortune. I do not say this as a rebuke, but as a duty, Mr. Stanhope."

"May I ask," said Charles with a look of some earnestness, "what Mrs. Anson would consider a sufficient fortune to be possessed by him who in return is to possess such a treasure?"

"I am not usurious in my demands," replied Mrs. Anson, "but I never will consent to Margaret's marriage without the man of her choice and *mine* can settle at least 10,000*l.* Then I should feel convinced that nothing short of a national bankruptcy could reduce them to actual poverty."

"Your objection then, madam, is to be overcome if I could settle 10,000*l.*?" said Charles, as he fixed his eyes full upon those of Mrs. Anson.

"Certainly," was the reply: "and if you could settle that, or even 8,000*l.*, so much do I esteem you and admire your character, that I would instantly join your hands."

"Then, madam, allow me to say, that I here pledge myself to settle 15,000*l.*; and I call Robert in to stand my security. He knows me incapable of a falsehood, and he will hear with pleasure, that my sister, on her being placed in possession of her fortune, did, with her husband's consent, present me with 20,000*l.* This I was resolved to keep a secret, to be beloved for my own, and not for my money's sake. So Margaret is mine, and we are to have a double wedding."

Robert was called, and stood security for Charles,—indeed, he had made his mind up to have advanced a few thousands rather than this match should have been off; the rector stood witness to the agreement; and thus the lowering clouds of the evening were all dispelled. Charles ran to his beloved Margaret, whose cold manner would have converted another to an icicle; but Charles believed it "prudent restraint," "maiden modesty," and half a score of other fine expressions and sentiments, which any but a lover might have seen and have known to be false.

O that the blessing of Marshall had been sanctified and made holy! At that moment no mortals had fairer views of terrestrial enjoyment; no one would have prayed for a prospect more brilliant than that of Douglass. But the clearest morn may by noon be overcast; and before the clouds of night close over the grave of day, the torrent may have fallen,—the tempest may have burst.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was an eventful day on which both couple were married. The bells rang their merry peal, the villagers crowded round the church—the day was beautiful, and the scene lively. The party had been augmented by Mr. and Mrs. Walton, who came to see their brother Charles made happy: but Douglass had not a relation on earth; he was now about to form a new connexion, and he certainly valued life the more since he had now some object to live for. The cottage was not far distant from the church, and the carriages made a very imposing line as they drove at a good pace to that porch which now for the last time was destined to see Douglass pass under its cover.

Julia was extremely affected; but Margaret looked on with a stoical indifference which Stanhope dignified as courage. Some little time was lost in arranging the preliminary ceremonies; but before eleven o'clock Mr. Marshall had placed the party by the altar, and having looked round the church in order to enforce silence,—for the rustle of dresses and the shuffling of shoes would have rendered him almost inaudible,—he began.

By that altar stood Julia, now between sixteen and seventeen. Her face was partially shaded by the long Brussels veil; but her beautiful dark eye, her rosy lip, and her pallid cheek, were perfectly visible. Her look was that of fervent devotion; and as the tear stole from her eyes and rapidly coursed down her face, the soft whisper of hope came to restore her to herself. Her mother's melancholy appearance contrasted sadly with that eye of expectant happiness.

But there was Margaret, robed in a splendid white satin dress, devoid of all ornaments but one, which was a brooch of pearls, imitating lilies-of-the-valley, set in dead gold. A wreath of orange-flowers encircled her head, over which was thrown a superb blond lace veil which nearly shaded her form; her small and elegant feet peeped from below the glossy garb, and she looked the fairest form and loveliest face that human eye could behold. But her features were unmoved; no tear at parting from

her mother started on her marble countenance,—no flash of hope, no lightning of happiness illuminated her beautiful, her magnificent features; even vanity did not seem gratified, or caused no sensation of apparent gratification: but, as motionless as a bride on canvass stood Margaret, and by her side was placed the man she had accepted as her husband.

The deep sonorous voice of Mr. Marshall as he read that impressive, that awful service, thrilled through Douglass. Julia's responses were almost inaudible, whilst Margaret's were firm and without the slightest trepidation. At last the word "amazement" announced the termination of the ceremony: they signed their names; and whilst Julia Anson was a straggle of indefinite lines, Margaret's was written in the same clear hand, with the usual boldness, that would have penned an invitation to dinner. Again the merry bells rang through the valley; again the little boys and girls, all eager to see so fine a wedding, mingled their shrill voices in the loud hurrahs; whilst the more respectable, at a farther distance, intruded not to stare the brides into confusion.

Gay was the breakfast which had been prepared in tents upon the small grassplat at the back of the cottage; the brides retired to change their dresses, and by one o'clock Julia and Douglass were on the road to Longdale House. The last person with whom Douglass shook hands was Mr. Verity: he had been present at the marriage, and with the honesty of manner which he always wore, and wore as a right, he implored Douglass to treasure up with miserly care and attention the lovely little casket which was now his; he spoke warmly of the joys, the real comforts of domestic life, whilst he slightly alluded to the danger of fashion, the folly of extravagance.

In his usual gay manner, he said to Julia as they parted, "I have taken the liberty, my pretty bride, of giving your husband a little advice; and on your account I shall not charge him my usual fee, but, with your permission, I being the man who brought him the best tidings he ever received, and by which he is enabled to make you happy, will take more than the value from your lips:" and he kissed her and called her "his child."

They drove away. The idle curiosity of some of Douglass's old abusers was satisfied; for, unlike the generality of people, who pull down the blinds as if they were guilty of an act they were ashamed of, they posted merrily along as common travellers, having none of those signals of matrimony misnamed favours, and which only tend to make the people who are silly

enough to carry this riding advertisement the show and the wonder of the neighbourhood.

At Longdale House was found every comfort which money could purchase. It was a singular fact, that Houghton had paid the most unremitting attention to the luxury of life at Longdale, when he never intended to reside there himself.

The newly-married couple became the lions of the place for the first month, and then sank down into their proper station. To Julia it was a scene of enchantment: young, ardent, loving and beloved, she felt the days of life roll rapidly away; her garden she attended herself, her favourite dogs and horses were caressed and watched, and in the delight of extending her charity to those around her, she won the golden opinions of her neighbours. Ah! why did not Douglass remain in this paradise?—why did he sigh to leave that which monarchs might have envied? It was no absolute solitude, no place built in a valley from which no other smoke was seen to curl above the many trees: but they were surrounded by a plentiful neighbourhood; they were within reach of a country town before ten minutes' moderate walking could have tired them; they had society if they wished it, they had solitude at their command.

Douglass might have had vices which were at this moment lulled to rest, but he had not ambition to rise, or rule a state: he considered those silent members who pay immensely for merely the name of being members of a House, and the privilege of franking letters, as so many vain-glorious people, who, having got within the threshold, are afraid to advance one step farther in the path they pant to pursue. Douglass had all he wanted, and yet there was a void in his heart. It was a natural restless disposition, which poverty had kept down in the village, but which now broke forth like half-smothered flame at the admission of air. But Julia was so happy in her abode, that, although a year had passed, she never expressed the smallest wish to move from her habitation. But Fate ruled them.

Douglass happened to have received a book of travels, which at that time and up to the present has held a considerable influence over the minds of Englishmen; and it so occurred that they both expressed a wish to move a little on the Continent, in order, as they smilingly said, to enhance the value of their own country, and their own home. Julia had been two months previous safely delivered of a boy, and the medical attendant recommended change of air when both mother and baby should become a little stronger. They therefore agreed to remain quiet

at Longdale until the end of September, then cross to Paris, and according to their feelings and disposition arrange their future movements. Such being the plan, they remained at home until the time proposed, when they put their scheme in practice, and early in October arrived at Boulogne.

Stanhope after his marriage took his beautiful statue to London; but receiving orders to join his regiment, quartered near Worcester, he retired to that dull town, and managed to get through life as most men do who have pretty wives and country quarters. As far as an honourable man blindly creating his wife into a goddess could be happy, Stanhope was so, and so remained for some years.

The morning of Douglass's departure from Longdale, he arose early, and taking his last walk round his domain, gave orders to his tenants, directing some few alterations to be made. In his return home, he found himself close to the grave of Benjamin Houghton. He paused as he read the epitaph he had himself penned. He felt an awful creeping of his flesh as he remembered his sad story; and, mutely gazing at the cenotaph, allowed his ideas to take a wide, unbounded range. He felt—and well he remembered it in after life—he felt a warning that his days of happiness were over, that no longer for him the sun of content was destined to shine, that hereafter he should be poor and miserable. He shook, or endeavoured to shake, from his mind the unwelcome presentiment: but it was useless—it clung to his very heart; and, as he turned to take his last farewell, he thought he heard a deep, deep sigh. Being one of those men not overtinged with superstition, he imagined that in reality some one might be near and in distress: he therefore returned, carefully examined the surrounding bushes, and then saying to himself that his ears had deceived him, he hastened from the spot, and began to urge the servants to the quicker discharge of their duty.

They soon started, and continued at that brisk pace which postboys in this blessed country accomplish when the wealthy travel and the pay is liberal. They at last came to a slower pace, and ultimately to a walk, as they ascended a rather steep hill. As Julia expressed a wish to walk, Douglass descended with her from the carriage, and they slowly mounted the road.

On their right was a tent of gipsies, who, to judge from some few feathers near the hedge, had not gone supperless to bed. The fire of sticks and the suspended kettle announced the preparation of their breakfast; whilst an old brown woman peeped

from beneath the tent and eyed the vehicle. A younger one now came forward to ask charity; and both Julia and Douglass recognised the pretty girl whose prophecy they had fulfilled. They soon brought to her recollection the cottage and their fortune, which she either remembered, or feigned so well to do, that Douglass was convinced she knew them again.

"Let us see," said Julia, "what our destiny may be. I declare," she continued, "I have an implicit confidence in your foresight; for you destined me my husband, and here he is to answer for himself."

Douglass felt extremely annoyed at this childish inclination of Julia's; but as she never expressed a wish he did not hasten to gratify, he gave his consent. But as the carriage had now topped the hill, he proposed that the old woman should tell his at the same moment that the young one should cross the palm of Julia, and thus afford some conversation in comparing their very different destinies as they journeyed to Dover.

Douglass was quite aware that Julia believed a little in the mysteries of these strange people; aud therefore, in order to secure a good fortune, he gave her half-a-crown, and offered the same himself to the old woman.

They stood apart. Julia's ear was ready for the reception of any strange fortune; whilst Douglass, it must be confessed, foreboded something bad. The old woman, after crossing his hand with the silver and asking if he gave it with a free will, placed it in her snug pocket, and began to trace the lines of his hand: she looked steadfastly at them, then at his face; but Douglass interrupted her gaze by urging her to be quick, as their time was short.

"Ay, ay," she began, "youth is ever impetuous; but this is no time for hurry. See here," as she looked at the lines, "how plain the marks of misery and want are indented!" and she traced her dirty fingers over those lines which every man, woman, and child have upon both their hands, and which when you look at them form an M, and consequently when regarded by another who stands opposite, a W.

"It is rather odd," Douglass remarked, "that your daughter never saw this when she predicted wealth, and love, and happiness, and every other blessing under the sun."

"She only saw the present," replied the old withered black-eyed hag; "I see the future:—listen, and remember the lines of Margery Colston, for they shall be true, as that your wife was not your first love."

Struck rather by this truth, which Douglass might have known was a saying as old as the hills, he listened to the "creaking couplets" of this modern Sybil, who, after clearing her croak, thus began:

"Thy way through life is sadly crost—
A fortune won, a fortune lost!
Advice unheeded,—*man* beware
Of friendly smile and gambler's snare.
I see through shrouds of distant time
Long years of misery and crime;
A barren branch of infamy!
This is the gipsy's prophecy!"

And before Douglass could bribe her to unsay her spell, she darted into her tent and threw herself on the ground. Douglass turned to his wife, and found her alone, and pale, and breathless.

"Good God! Julia," he exclaimed; "what ails you, my dear?—you look frightened to death."

"And am," she replied. "I wish I never had heard the voice of that dingy girl; for I shall now from this moment feel the truth of her saying,—I shall be miserable by anticipation. Oh! it cannot be;—and how could this girl know beforehand what Fate may have decreed?"

"Heed it not, my dearest Julia," replied Douglass. "These women live upon the fears and hopes of the credulous; and we have paid no very great compliment to our instructors in youth to have listened to the croakings of these hags. It is very obvious that it is only a shilling guess or a half-crown couplet, or they would know their own destiny, and avoid the gallows and the colonies a little oftener than they do."

"It is very odd though, my dear Robert, how the strongest minds yield to a little superstition. Now, I would wager a trifle, that if your old woman told you something which corresponded with that the young one told me, although you would term it an odd *coincidence of circumstances*, yet you would feel rather uneasy that such odd coincidence did occur with such a precision."

"Do you remember what she told you, my dear Julia?"

"Yes, that I do," she replied; "and I wish I had never heard it."

"Well, then," resumed Douglass, "we will compare notes when we get in the carriage. And after panting up the hill in silence and resuming their seats, Douglass wrote the gipsy's

verses in his pocket-book, in order to avoid the impending ruin directly he perceived the cloud gathering over him.

Julia did the same; and the former confessed himself rather startled when he read the "*odd coincidence*" the younger brownie had thus foretold; it seeming a rule amongst these people, that you have prose for a shilling, and poetry for your half-crown.

"Tho' the days of your youth have with riches been crown'd,
Believe not those riches for ever shall last;
For the Fates on your infant malignantly frown'd,
And your evening of life is with sorrow o'ercast.
Not a branch from your loins shall enliven your age;
Cold, cold is the grave in a far foreign shore!
Beware of this warning from Margery's page,—
You shall live to *despise* what you *now* most adore."

"That last line has a clear reference to me," said Douglass, "and by way of blotting out the dark hint, I'll kiss away the only tear I yet have seen on Julia's glowing cheek. Come, my little timid dear," he said as he took her clammy hand, "think less of the future, and more of the present. Poor little Houghton has, I dare say, like most of us, misery enough in this world without gipsy's nonsense to make it worse; and we are Christians enough to bow to a decree we cannot avert, come when and how it will."

"Do not, Douglass, I beseech you, speak in that fearful way! You do not think the child will die?"

"Not a moment the sooner for the wisdom of Margery Colston, be assured," he replied. "I spoke in the manner I did because I saw you droop over the doggrel of young Margery. These women think it right to give you something for your money; and so for a crown, like many a prince, we have lost happiness."

"Only for a moment, my dear Robert. But it is an odd coincidence," she added with a smile.

Now, *it is an odd thing* how men seek to find out misery: and what is still more strange is this,—that those very people who by their religion are predestinarians are always the most superstitious; and yet when it comes to a business of the scimeter or the bow-string, they quietly place it all to the account of Takdeer (destiny), and walk with as much composure to their death as a skilful surgeon does to an operation. We are all of us a pack of contradictions tied up by the thread of existence;

and as fast as one contradiction is confuted by Death, up jumps a young controversy, which soon supplies the place of the contradiction: and so we go on wrangling and fighting, making war and signing peace, until the old undertaker and the sexton finish the business which the doctor has left unfinished, and "Good night, Marmion."

When a man runs his eye over history, he sees in every age, in every clime, just the same ambition, just the same idea of politics and policy, which the author of "Devereux" thus defines: "The first is wisdom for one's country; the second, wisdom for one's self." The wheel of Time rolls on, generation succeeds generation as wave succeeds wave: the same stimulus still excites, the same butterfly propensities to flutter in the sunshine of court favour; the same readiness, and generally oftener done, to kneel to a king than bow the knee to a God. On the other side, chimney-sweeper succeeds chimney-sweeper; the beggar of one generation leaves the crossing and the broom to the next generation; the seven small children of misery, who have been let out at sixpence a day to a would-be mother of a large family, with the privilege of being pinched to excite compassion, for an extra sixpence a week, grow up, become mothers, let out their offspring for the same laudable purpose; and professions, like religion, depend upon the custom of the parents. The son of a play-actor is generally a Thespian ranter; the daughters of the profligate are generally found in the streets pursuing the parental example; the clerk of the Treasury gets his son in the same office; the soldier places his first-born in the army; the sailor cradles his infant in a ship; and the lawyer feels a glow of satisfaction when he hears his son arguing in a bad cause.

Such, then, is life: the wisest is the man who turns it most to his own comfort without being dependant on another. We are like the travelling carriage,—sometimes going merrily along the road, sometimes suddenly upset when least expected, sometimes toiling up a hill and sometimes dashing down it.

Douglass wished he had kept his philosophy a little more in view, and had guarded in his heart a little more cautiously the advice of old Houghton. He would not have left Dover the day after his arrival, to go over that miserable road of the Great Nation, which, like ambition, shows many an uneven step to be overcome before the traveller arrives at the wished-for goal.

CHAPTER XV.

"Now," thought Douglass as he looked round the splendid rooms at the Hôtel des Princes in the Rue Richelieu,—"Now am I in the very house where young Houghton first took his wife when he first left his good old father never to see him again; and I came here in order that his example might be a warning to me, that if I indulged in the same freaks, the consequences, the calamities which befell him might awe me into reason."

"Well, Julia, my love, after all our fatigue over that abominable road which the Great Nation—many blessings on their fertile inventions—have constructed for the ruin of one's carriage and one's temper, what think you of this Paris, so famed for its climate, its wits, and its gayety?"

"Why, thank Heaven! I cannot answer one of your questions. Of the climate I am no judge, since we only arrived yesterday; of wit I cannot give an opinion; and as for gayety, the only thing to make me laugh has been a monkey riding on a poodle, dressed in the uniform of King Charles the Tenth's guard, and so like his keeper as to be taken for his son. But if I were to judge from first sight, I certainly should not think these dirty streets, these noisy vehicles—for they make more riot than wagons in England, and these eternal drums, at all likely to captivate me."

"They profess to be a military nation, and therefore they must have the outward symbols."

"As long, Robert, as they don't *clash* their *cymbals*, I care very little for their parade or their dress."

"You see, Julia, the air has infected you a little: you never made a pun in England. When you have got all your domestic arrangements made, we will walk over the Louvre, the sight most worth seeing in this city, and which will be a monument of the taste and genius of Napoleon as long as Paris exists amongst the cities of the earth. But look to little Robert, for his life is in danger if you believe Margery's prediction; and

that will have one good effect, it will make us more watchful over his safety and his health."

"No mother," said Julia, "requires the stimulus of a gipsy's prophecy to guard her child in sickness or in health. Before I thought of the minor comforts of myself I had seen little Robert asleep in his grand bed, and had given every order likely to conduce to his comfort. That done, I do own that after my fatigues are forgotten, I shall have no objection to seeing the strange sights of this far-famed Paris, of dining at a restaurateur's, and of witnessing the antics of the dancers on the boards of their own theatre."

To the inclinations of his dear little wife, Douglass lent a ready ear. Time had not chilled his affection; and he verily believed at that moment that the little Houghton—that link in the chain of human happiness—had bound him closer and closer to Julia. He loved her tenderly, dearly; for she, whatever in her gay moments she might have said, looked at him as her husband, her protector, her friend. To her wish, then, in behalf of sight-seeing, Douglass speedily agreed, and they commenced their operations both far and near. Versailles, that work of royal imagination,—St. Cloud,—in short, the whole of the royal palaces were visited; they rummaged the guide-book for days of amusement, whilst the evenings were spent at the different theatres in raptures with this gay and lively people. In this manner a month soon elapsed: still had Paris sufficient charms to attract them; and, finding the place so agreeable, they resolved to winter there, and leave the Italian tour until the spring of next year.

Oh, cursed resolution!—doubly, trebly cursed;—from that resolution sprang days of unhappiness, nights of wretchedness. To that fatal resolution Douglass was indebted for all the misery of his future situation—all his lost comforts—all, all that contributed to adorn the road of life, and make its traveller journey in ease and contentment. If ever predestination was the creed of a Mahomedan, that creed had fixed itself upon Douglass in looking back through the clouds of life which had darkened over his growing age: it seems as if the hand of Fate had guided him by the prophecy of the gipsy. Vain now are all speculations as to how the evil could have been avoided; equally vain is it to recall all those little warnings which tapped so lightly at the door of caution, and warned him of the bitter fruit he was about to gather.

They had now exhausted Paris, and had partially retired to

the domestic felicity they enjoyed at Longdale, occasionally varying the scene by frequenting the opera, to which Julia had become very partial; and at this time they had not increased their acquaintance not even by one name. They knew no one; they were regarded as people of large fortune but reserved habits. Frequent attempts had been made by the eager solicitors of English society or French adventurers; but all had been steadily refused. They were happy in themselves; they wanted no external light to flare upon their social board, and they resolutely denied all intruders upon their acquaintance. It is now that we purpose making a few remarks upon the impoverished state of the French nobility, and in the picture of this fallen grandeur show the blessings which arise from the law of primogeniture.

In this country, hundreds who are unhappily younger sons lift up their angry voices against the palpable injustice of one monopolising that which ought by the laws of affection to be equally divided amongst the whole. The reformers of this supposed abuse urge, as a reason, the envy, hatred, and malice with which one brother is likely to view the other, and thus occasion those family jars which, whilst in the higher sphere of life they disturb the domestic economy, may also breed considerable intestine commotions in the economy of the state. All the objections which the ingenuity of younger sons have suggested would be removed by asking them to reside in Paris and become acquainted with its society; and it will require no letters of introduction to the noblemen by birth of that great nation.

How is it possible that the high character and station of the nobleman can be sustained after a large fortune has been subdivided between eight children, and again that subdivision to take place with eight more children? What then (leaving out the widow's allowance) will be the income of the head of the family?

Who, if imprudence should have impoverished a younger brother, who is to relieve him?—where is the younger child to look for support?—to be pushed forward to serve a state although possessing the best of talents: for we all know that many a man pines in want who has more abilities than half the chancellors of exchequer that ever managed the finance of a great country; and many a poor obscure person would be better able to conduct the foreign diplomacy, and write half the communications in the language of the different countries, than some foreign secretaries of state: but how is he to be known—how is

he to be pushed forward—how is he to find an opportunity of distinguishing himself?—his elder brother has no more influence than himself; it is not his own sphere which will exalt him—no, no, envy would guard against that. We do not see the shopkeepers of that most quiet parish of Marylebone suggesting one of their own class for their representative—not they. We are all remarkably fond of liberty; but we take most especial care that the liberty shall not exalt our equal over ourselves.

But when the elder son succeeds to the honours and the fortunes of his father—when the estate, instead of being rooted from the family, is still upheld as an asylum for all—when the power given by the aristocracy of wealth gives also power in the state,—the younger sons educated at our first colleges, with minds cultivated, honour founded, have an advocate, and a strong one, in their elder brother; and if they follow the profession of the sword, or unravel the mysteries of law or of religion, they do not work without a prospect of reward; and they know that they have one to ask for them, and one who by the support he yields to the state has a right to ask, that they may receive the merited promotion.

When a man, humble in birth, but brilliant in talents, thrusts himself by the energies of his mind a little above the level of his associates, who have we found the first to make him useful to the state but the nobleman of fortune? It would be easy to mention many at this moment who owe their advancement entirely to the power of money in the hands of an elder son. The contrast between France and England is thus drawn, because many believe that the picture of the former is caricatured. It is a nation brave and generous, but falling fast into the republican upas which will blast all around it.

Douglass thought, and the best of us will think, that he might without much hazard to himself venture into some of the sinks of iniquity so famous in Paris, and to which he was indebted for the fortune he possessed—thus causing, as he thought, at any rate, some good out of evil. No man had fortified himself more against the dangers of gaming—at least, if reflection is a safeguard—than he had done. Frequently in his dreams, when his fancy revisited the tomb of old Houghton, and as he rambled over the beautiful grounds of Longdale, or when imagination recalled the scene in the pew, the cottage-gate, the gipsy, his own former abode, and his early propensities, even in his sleep he made vows to abjure that hated salon; to conquer the

most latent disposition (which once occupied his mind) of play; to allow curiosity to go unsatisfied in regard to Frascati's and the Palais Royal: and when he awoke, he prayed with a fervency unknown to him during his comparative poverty, that he might profit by the example of others, and not, like the generality of fools, pay for the experience of which others had written and published.

They were in the Hotel des Princes, in the Rue Richelieu, as before mentioned, and they occupied those splendid apartments which a few years previous formed the residence of Prince Leopold, now a *king*.

It was one of those peculiar Parisian days when the mud makes very considerable advances towards the sides of the street as a fiacre splashes through the gutter in the centre, that he stood gaping out of his window, when the servant, who was one of the waiters, came to remove the breakfast apparatus. Julia had retired to play with little Houghton; and Douglass, being seized with a fit of blue devils, had recourse to conversation with the servant to dissipate the gloom of his feelings. Nothing is so difficult in poetry or conversation as the beginning—without indeed it be the end; and thus, merely for the sake of breaking the ice of reserve, he asked the waiter, who resided in the large house exactly in front of his window; "for," said he, continuing, "I see a vast number of people eternally going in and out of an evening, and I remark it is always lit up in a superior manner."

"Cela, monsieur," replied the waiter; "c'est le Salon des Etrangers."

Douglass started as if struck by lightning. "The Salon des Etrangers!" he ejaculated: "I thought that place had been on the other side of the Boulevards: surely it did stand there?"

"It did," replied the garçon; "but now it is held there. It is a kind of club where messieurs occasionally play," continued the talkative fellow, as he piled saucers, cups, plates, every thing, into one tray; and spreading the fingers of his left hand, and holding the arm in a bent position, balancing the utensils with the most unwavering exactness, he added as he retreated, "and many of your countrymen know it."

"May Satan blister his blabbing tongue!" thonght Douglass, for he was already miserable: a curiosity uncontrollable crept over him to see the interior of a place so celebrated. He did not dare mention it to Julia: bred up as she had been in domestic seclusion, she had learned to couple the words gamesters

and swindlers, and believed that one was inseparable from the other. "The man," she once said, "who sits down to win from his friend cannot be actuated by honourable feelings, for no sooner will fortune favour him than he will exult over the loss of his friend; this is ungenerous, it leads to recrimination—recrimination leads to angry words—angry words create enemies; one likes to conquer or ruin an enemy, and we are not overscrupulous how we succeed as long as we do succeed, and thus revenge is not unfrequently the herald of dishonesty."

Douglass looked at that cursed house for more than half the day: he felt his curiosity overcoming his resolution; he brought to the aid of the former "example"—the determination not to play one farthing—the necessity of travellers seeing strange sights—the weakness it betrayed in shunning rather than facing an evil; and he backed it all up by saying, "Why, if I do as the sailors did, treat resolution to a glass, I see no reason why I should play; or if I did, why I should lose."

On the other side, he saw Harry Houghton's ghost pointing to his pistols—his victim under the lamp in Curzon-street—his miserable old father—and lastly, that tomb, and the last counsel concerning it, as plain as the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. The reader will here see the truth as applied to gamesters and women—"If either consider or entertain the least parlance with curiosity, they are lost!" Douglass felt his courage gradually yielding: he made a desperate sortie to recover the fortune of the day; the enemy beat him back, followed him over the drawbridge, overcame the last of his soldiers, and before four o'clock he was conquered and had resolved to visit this place. This was the first step of his downfall; and as Napoleon told Talleyrand when that minister made the same remark when the emperor sent his army to Spain, "Then take care I don't kick you down the rest," so might Douglass have heard the voice of triumphant curiosity threatening with him the same disgraceful exit.

Now came the first falsehood to be told to Julia. At this Robert shuddered; for he knew that

> "Beauty, like supreme dominion,
> Is best supported by opinion;"

and that directly the first breach of confidence was discovered, Julia's good opinion of him would be shaken, and he from the knowledge of the error would lose his "lawful and right supremacy." Many—ah! many, will say, "Why, with your eyes

open, for the sake of an idle curiosity, run the risk of being made supremely miserable by anxiety? or why break down the barrier of domestic happiness which your honour—your affection had upreared. The answer is with the poet:

"Fate steals along with silent tread,
Found often'st in what least we dread:
An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man who's strangled by a hair."

It was his destiny: it was a part of the trial he was to experience in life.

It happened, however, that for the present he had no need to add falsehood to his folly. His child, now about six months old, was seized by one of the many maladies to which children are subject; and Julia, whose maternal anxiety was excessive, slept in the room they had appropriated for a nursery. Douglass therefore kept his own counsel; and when Julia had retired to rest, and had, with her usual sincerity of affection, implanted on his lips a kiss as she murmured a tender "Good night," he took his hat, and, with a throbbing heart and fearful foreboding, crossed the street and stood at the entrance of the salon.

It happened that a great political excitement took place that day in Paris; and as he arrived at the circular staircase, a knot of Englishmen were busy in discussing the probable termination of these growing disturbances. Douglass joined in the conversation; and after giving his opinion and listening to that of others—by which latter means more friends are made than by the former,—one of the number said, "Well, we may as well discuss the matter in doors as out: let us go in." Douglass, to whom the remark was made, observed that he was not a member: upon which one of the number, an apparently young man of perfect suavity of manners, and one who seemed to know more of France and Frenchmen than the talented author of "France and the French," volunteered his services in the way of an introduction; and Douglass followed his footsteps, and obeying the injunctions painted on the right-hand side of the entrance—"*Essuyez bien vos pieds*, S. V. P."—he entered this superior pandemonium.

In the antechamber was a table, round which were assembled five or six servants of the establishment. The kind *friend* nodded and pointed to Douglass; the servants took his cloak and hat; and when the folding-doors were opened, he made his

appearance in this gorgeous hell, quite astonished at its comforts and its company.

This room was well lighted up; the various papers of Paris and of London were strewed upon the table,—a large fire enlivened the apartment, opposite to which was a sofa, on which reclined a venerable man decorated with a star, and who seemed far from the scene of dissipation and of ruin, if one might judge from the smile which played upon his lips. The room at one end was supported by two pillars, near which, and in the left-hand corner, was a tea-table: a servant attended, dressed in the livery of the establishment, to supply the different gentlemen. At the end opposite to the door was a window which, when opened, led to a terrace, terminating in a long garden lately much reduced, as the ground has been turned to a more profitable use by letting it out on a building-lease. The ceiling of this first room was exquisitely painted, and Venus rising from the Ocean formed the subject on which a celebrated artist had used his utmost talent.

In the Salon, unlike any other gaming establishment, there are commissioners in the persons of French noblemen, who receive the company; and to the reigning king Douglass was now introduced. He was rather a short, thin, elderly gentleman, who spoke English well and fluently, but with a strong accent: his manner was kind and amiable; he was obliging, civil, courteous; and, strange as it may appear to Englishmen, the situation is not considered derogatory to the aristocracy of France, or the epaulettes of a general.

There is a charm about that person's manner, an elegance about his conversation, a superiority in his attainments, that his worst enemy could not traduce: he is, in fact, a thorough gentleman. Robert Douglass's name was written down in a book, with his residence: he was informed that he was now a member of the Cercle; and he was given to understand that he would shortly be invited to share the hospitality of the establishment.

The gentleman hinted to him the danger of gaming, for he was far above the villany of enticing the unwary to venture into the deep and dangerous whirlpool of play; he warned him to avoid the lure rather than to court it; and he left him with the impression on his mind that he was a great deal too good for his situation.

It was whilst Douglass wandered into the various topics of the day, that he heard the first rattle of the dice, and saw those

who had been idling their time over a newspaper drop the common excitement to rush to that of a far greater, and of a far more ruinous nature. He was not slow to follow, and soon found himself by a round table in the centre of a circular room. Between the many pillars which surrounded this apartment were settees, the backs resting against looking-glasses; whilst the decorative part, being white and gold, gave a cheerful appearance, which otherwise would have been dimmed by the green shade which covered the suspended lamp over the table. But the wood fire alone—the crackling of the wood—the brightness of the blaze, contributed to enliven the dreary silence of expectant success.

On the mantelpiece was that common ornament a clock, the device of which was ill suited to the apartment; it was Cupid and Psyche in amorous dalliance, dawdling with Time; and that clock might have told its gazers of hours misspent, of moments of excitement ruinous to health, to comfort, to honour. Douglass looked at that monitor of life, and moralised over the scene before him: he regretted that the young could be enticed to forego the nobler ambition of man for the minor gratification of gain; for, after all, gaming is but a desire of gain by the distress of another: it is the purchase of anxiety at an enormous rate and ruinous price;—it is the solace of the idle, the resort of the frivolous;—it is, in its first stage, the innocent harmless fly in the strong web of the many-eyed spider: it begins with a flutter, and it ends with death.

Douglass passed to the next room. A long table ran from end to end: this was the rouge-et-noir table. Here he remarked the pale and the wan of countenance busily employed in endeavouring to thwart the decree or the whim of Fortune by marking with a pin on a card the result of each deal, as if calculation could overcome chance! There, deal after deal, would the half-ruined man mark with scrupulous care the winning colour; whilst ever and anon he counted his money, running the Napoleons from hand to hand by threes or fives—then placing them in different heaps, in fantastic crosses,—for gamesters are always superstitious; then changing the seat, turning the chair round, and a thousand other imbecile peculiarities which are only to be seen when the mind is paralysed, and the weakness of intellect has given way to the uncertainty of hope.

The living picture before him might have scared Douglass from the talons of these birds of avarice and of prey. He might have seen in the sunken eye—the premature age—the quivering

lip—the angry glance—the distorted countenance,—that if gaming was happiness, it varied its hues and shapes from those of pleasure and enjoyment.

He returned half sick with disgust to the hazard-table, and looked long and long at the change of fortune. He saw the timid man, when the stream of the goddess flowed favourably, availing himself but cautiously of her goodness. She had too often deceived him; but had he then doubled and trebled his stake, large would have been the profit. But no sooner had the slighted deity perceived the coldness of her votary, than the tide was turned, and the inexperienced youth, attempting to stem the stream of adversity, lost his all by daringly opposing it. Then came cursings and execrations, not loud, but deep;—then came the involuntary motion of the hand—the ineffectual search for more—the hasty look as if to brave the eye it hardly dared to meet. Fearful—fearful sight! too well remembered, although too slightly, was the impression made upon his heart.

When Douglass looked at the clock, he found he had already wasted two hours: it was past one o'clock, and he thought of his home and his happiness. The gentleman who introduced him, and whose name was Walsingham, now joined him: he had been successful; the glittering heap of gold, the numerous bank-notes, the counters of various shapes and worth, he placed upon the mantel-piece, and he rubbed his hands with a pleasure almost incredible when he enumerated the gross gainings of about 17,000 francs,—an insignificant sum, and only rendered of greater value when won at play.

Douglass remarked to him his astonishment at the splendour of the establishment, and the apparent order and fairness by which it was conducted. There was a keen glance—a searching look, as much as to express his doubt if Douglass were in jest or in earnest; when, in rather an abrupt manner, he said,

"This, I fancy, is your first visit here: I recommend you to make it your last."

Douglass felt rather pleased than annoyed at the blunt familiarity of his new acquaintance, who now, as he had won, looked not more than thirty: although his face was furrowed and his eye sunken, yet still the freshness of manhood was upon him, and neither age nor excitement had blanched his hair.

"Your recommendation is good," replied Douglass, "but rather at variance with your practice."

"Yes," said Walsingham rather quickly; "I understand you:—a kind of sign-post which points, but does not follow the

way; a kind of pilot who bawls out 'Yonder is the beacon,' and *runs* upon the *bank*."

Douglass smiled at the pun, and asked him "why he continued a course he recommended others not to steer."

"Why," replied Walsingham, "I was a happy man until I became a victim and got tied to a *stake*, and am now quietly anticipating my execution. I am the best man in the world to give advice, for I have profited by experience. But I give you this hint,—that if you want to be asked to dinner here, you must dabble a little with a few golden fish: they are baits which are always taken, and the fisherman not unfrequently hooked."

"I think," replied Douglass, "that to see the whole lure that is offered to the gudgeons who are ultimately treated like the fish, only that it is a pocket exenteration instead of a human one, even I must break through my vow and play a little: but it is many years since I played the game, and must trust to their honour, for it seems conducted with great propriety."

"Oh yes," replied Mr. Walsingham, "with a vast deal of *propriety*," giving an extra force to the word.

"I mean to say," continued Douglass, "with a vast deal of fairness,—that is, no cheating is allowed."

"Ah," replied Walsingham; "that very much depends upon the stake that is down. It is quite wonderful with what extra rapidity that pale-faced croupier sitting in state at the rouge-et-noir table counts when there are a few billets-de-banque upon the table. But, God knows, I would not imply any unfairness."

"Oh, certainly not," responded Douglass; "only you think it would be just as well to count the cards yourself."

"Just so; merely as a precaution it is not bad policy to count money after your father," continued Walsingham; "for when you have paid as much for your experience as I have, you will learn to estimate the honesty of human nature at precisely what it is worth. Does not the very decoration of this establishment convince you that much must be won to support it? and if the game was perfectly even—that is, as regards its chances—and that fair play was always observed, do you think Fortune would always roll her wheel in one direction, making the visiters as a kind of cornucopia from the contents of which the proprietor and monopoliser of gaming is to be enriched? I have introduced you here, and I am sorry for it, for you are just as likely to be ruined as any man I know. I see you possess *curiosity*: it may be a 'strong sign of a vigorous intellect,' but I do not

know a more dangerous associate either in the streets or houses of Paris."

"Well, then," said Douglass, "I am resolved to see all I can of this pandemonium; and by way of beginning, I will just try my luck at this hazard for a few Napoleons. I care not if I win, and it cannot hurt me if I lose; so I wish you good night and a repetition of your good fortune. As for myself, I do not intend to *play*—only to dabble, as you call it; for I am boy enough to wish my curiosity satisfied for more reasons than one." And again repeating the "Good night," Douglass sat down at the table and was soon in the very whirlpool he had promised to shun.

CHAPTER XVI.

Douglass awoke pale and fatigued: he had hardly been in bed four hours, and his slumbers were disturbed by awful dreams and uncomfortable apprehensions. Strange is the first feeling of the excitement in a gamester's mind; strange the overpowering weight which presses down reason, which paralyses all exertion, which leaves but one wish, chills affection, and blights love. Douglass felt like a guilty criminal about to be placed at the bar when he heard his wife's hand upon the door. She came laughing with joy that her child was better, she threw her arms round him and she kissed him with her usual fondness; but she was not slow to imagine that the return was not made with its usual affection. Women are quick at this discovery; where men would never find the difference, the other sex are tremblingly alive to the slightest variation: with women, love is the very foundation of all thought, all desire; with men, love is second to ambition, and not capable of competition with gaming.

"My dearest Robert," she began, "you look ill to-day, as if you had not slept, and your air is distracted. Tell me, I pray, what has disturbed your quiet. And now you look," she continued, smiling, "like one who has been guilty of a bad action and afraid to confess it."

"I did not," replied Douglass, "sleep well last night, and I was annoyed about poor little Houghton, who, I thought, looked very ill indeed. The fact is, I reproached myself for not having sent for the doctor; for well I know that children, although sometimes mightily tenacious of life, at other times are extinguished by the breath which would blow out a candle."

"Oh, dearest!" replied that affectionate creature, "rest assured that I shall be the first to be alarmed for Houghton: I, his mother and his nurse, must first experience the poor little creature's want of appetite; and the pain that it would occasion me would remind me of the cause, even if a mother's eyes could be closed against her child's appearance."

They sat down to breakfast; and again the vigilant attention of Julia startled Douglass.

"Why, Robert, you can neither eat nor talk to-day:—what is the matter with you?"

"Nothing, my dear; only I do not feel much inclined to eat. I feel—"

"Ill, Robert? Surely those sheets could not have been damp? By-the-by, I thought I heard you moving during the night,—that is, about three this morning. Were you up then?"

"I do not remember," said Douglass (and he felt the equivocation), "getting out of bed at that hour."

"You answer me strangely, my dear Robert. Surely you did not go out after I left you last night?"

"Certainly not," replied Douglass; and he felt at the instant as if the chord which bound him in beautiful harmony to Julia snapped with a discordant sound, and was ruined for ever.

"Perhaps, after all," said Julia, "it is merely a French cold, or French diet, and I know you lords of creation cannot bear to be teased about your health. But you know, Robert," and she placed her dear little hand upon his,—"you know I am a privileged person, and if I think proper I shall send for the doctor to feel your pulse. As I live," said the dearest creature that ever breathed, "it riots like one under a strong excitement: and yet you *look* calm and easy, although pale and fatigued. Why, Robert, your pulse is just what I should imagine from your description to belong to a gamester or a drunkard!"

That blow struck home; Douglass writhed as he felt the words penetrate to his heart; a cold icy tremor shot through all his veins, and his lips blanched under the influence of the creeping venom; nor could resolution or sudden effrontery course back the blood to the cheeks it had deserted—to the lips it had forsaken. Julia saw it—her quick eye perceived it; but she was too young to discriminate between anger and guilt. Afraid that she had provoked him by the remark, she threw herself round his neck, and asking a million of pardons, embraced him long and tenderly. She implored him to send for the doctor, she rubbed his forehead, she chafed his temples, she urged him to recline upon the sofa and to amuse himself by some trivial reading, whilst she would prepare some cold draught.

"What!" murmured Douglass to himself; "of what use can a doctor be to me, without I administer to myself? Macbeth's physician could not cure me; for in a mind diseased the

patient must be his own physician, and much I fear the struggle is beyond my effort."

It is in vain to attempt a delineation of Douglass's mind in order to show the overwhelming influence of gaming. He felt inclined, even with the remembrance of Harry vividly before him, to quarrel with her he best loved, the only woman he ever really loved,—he thought of boldly confessing, (confession, indeed, to a woman!) of declaring his time his own, his money his own, and his determination no longer to submit to a surveillance so disgustingly prying. Then came the shame of detection in the falsehood he had uttered when he declared he had not left the house, when his own servant could best bear witness against him. There again he felt cruelly degraded :—men servants chatter in the halls and in the kitchens; women's ears are quick, and tongues are noisy; if Julia should, her suspicions being excited, inquire and be convinced that he had not returned until three o'clock in the morning, who could say that jealousy would not overcome discretion? Douglass knew no one in Paris, *that* she knew. The theatres, the operas, all places of amusement are closed at midnight; then those whose daily avocations engender labour, sleep, or seek it; the honest artificer has closed his shop, the gay bustle of the light has been succeeded by the dull quiet of the darkness, and only the drowsy debauchee, the tired prostitute, or the jaded patrol, disturb the streets; one place still glares with light, still has vigilant inmates,—still re-echoes the curses of the unfortunate, the noise of the dice, the ringing of gold, and there—*there* was Douglass, and now he felt himself the coward who dared not own it,—the liar, the self-convicting liar, who had denied it.

It is but one short step to cross the Rubicon—he had done it. Henceforth for him was the conscientious applause of a calm conscience?—impossible! He had degraded the mind he formerly sought to elevate; he thought himself despised—he felt he deserved it. Oh, how fervently did he wish for some Houri to wring from his heart the black drop which envenomed the whole circulation! what would he not have given to have recalled the last twenty-four hours of his miserable existence! He struggled to overcome the feeling: he felt himself the more and more entangled in the mesh, and like the fool, afraid of retracing the step because his shadow was behind him, he rushed forward to sure darkness, wherein he should be divested of the troublesome companion.

He lay down, and held a book in his hand: it was "St.

Leon." He opened it at the very part where, by his imprudence, his wife and family are ruined,—and how?—by gaming! He shut his mind from the wholesome lesson; he felt too wise to need the advice: he turned towards the close of the volume,—he found St. Leon possessed of wealth, and he thought the philosopher's stone was a pair of dice. His eyes ran over the words; but they never were conveyed to his mind, and he felt much like some of those sanctified hypocrites who, whilst murmuring a prayer, are thinking of a ball or a bonnet; or like the boy condemned to read a certain number of pages, and who, whilst traversing the print, is either playing at peg-top, or prisoner's base.

Julia had returned, and Douglass had mastered his feelings; his temper, which had been ruffled in the morning, had now recovered its partial smoothness, and he answered so well, and spoke so like himself, that she returned to the baby, and left him a consummate hypocrite. He had not long pondered over his own abasement, before his servant announced Mr. Walsingham; and that intruding gentleman seemed to follow the air which conveyed his own name. Douglass welcomed him, but felt the necessity of at once making him a partner in his falsehood; and no sooner had the servant closed the door, than he told him that he must present him as an old schoolfellow, and that he was on no account to mention where he had met him; on the contrary, he was to have seen him yesterday entering the hotel, to have inquired his name, and to have, for the good feeling of early friendship, eagerly paid him the first visit.

This is the sad effect of one falsehood, that it must be supported by a hundred—that the memory must be true to its master, or the whole will be discovered;—in short, the man who is guilty of this moral wrong at once strengthens the arms of his enemies, whilst he weakens his own.

"I hear," said Walsingham, "that they used you roughly for your first imprudence last night, and that the bank, previously losers, left off gainers from your tide of misfortune. I hope the amount, like a man's fortune or a woman's beauty, is rather exaggerated."

"I do not know," replied Douglass, "what report may have circulated, but I lost sixty-five thousand francs. It is paying sharply for amusement and experience, and perhaps for an invitation!"

"Right," replied Walsingham; "here is one, which they asked me to bring to your hotel; and as I shall be there, I shall

be happy to show you the lions: it really is worth seeing, and I recommend you to accept it. You see what is added in the postscript. "Vous êtes prié de renvoyer au plus tard l'avant-veille le billet d'invitation, en cas d'empêchement."

"I shall go," replied Douglass: "but you must do me the favour to ask me to dinner with *you*," he said, putting the note into the fire; "for I have promised not to dine *there*, and I should not like to make an unquiet house for the gratification of my puerile curiosity. When my wife comes, do you ask me."

At this moment Julia entered the room, and was introduced to Walsingham as an old schoolfellow of her husband's, who had paid that compliment to his appearance, that although they had separated some sixteen years, yet that time had used him so well, that he had retained the same face by which he had recognised him yesterday.

Walsingham bowed gracefully, and, taking up the hint and the conversation, paid a handsome compliment to Julia, by adding, that those who were happy always looked young; in short, that the happiness of her countenance seemed reflected upon her husband.

"Time must have used him well, Mr. Walsingham," said Julia, "to have so little altered the general character of his countenance, that you can distinguish the likeness after so many years absence. Pray what school were you at together?"

Walsingham seemed an adept at lying—he was ready to pawn his soul for a third person; he answered off-hand, "At Winchester."

"Why, Robert," remarked Julia, "I never heard you say that Winchester was one of your schools."

"Yes, my dear, you remember," he mentioned, "that I was removed from Twyford, which is its preparatory school, when I was about seven years old. But, Mr. Walsingham," continued Douglass, "have you been long in Paris?"

"Not very long,—that is, a year or so," replied the quondam friend, apparently embarrassed. "But I know few, very few people here; and as I have at last fallen upon one of my friends whom Time had separated from me, allow me to make amends for the old tyrant, and beg you to give me the pleasure of your company at dinner to-morrow."

Douglass looked at Julia; she seemed to nod assent. He accepted the invitation; and Walsingham, after promising to call for him at a quarter to six, in order to conduct him to the café where he was to give his dinner, was about to depart, when

Julia interposed, and said, "My dear Robert, how much better would it be if Mr. Walsingham were to dine with us. I should then hear the old school-stories; and you, who look any thing but well, would be under my guardian care. Besides, I want to pay Mr. Walsingham some attention for his compliment to your youth."

"I really am highly flattered, madam," replied Walsingham; "but I have engaged four or five persons to dine with me, and I cannot put them off, and therefore the pleasure you propose must be deferred until another day. The change will be beneficial to your husband; and you may rely upon my only obliging him to taste one or two wines, and eat the best cookery at the Rocher."

"What a precious villain I am already!" said Douglass, musing to himself: "by heavens! I feel the folds of the snake getting closer and closer around me, and yet have neither spirit nor resolution to either fly or face the danger. Here I am floundering in lies, whilst, if I ordered the post-horses and went to Naples, I should rid myself of my conscience, my hell, and my new friend." Thus did he muse, until he brought to his recollection the features of Walsingham. He was tall, well-looking, clever, quick, engaging; there was an ease and elegance in his manner, and his natural behaviour was that best designated by "simplicity being the highest effort of art." His history he was resolved to fathom; for, although not much past thirty in age, his eye was sunken, his cheeks were furrowed, he had a strong expression of care, and at times he was perfectly melancholy. But with this there was a quick, cunning look: he seemed always vigilant, lest he should be surprised; and when hastily observed, his face flushed, and he generally turned away. In conversation he hardly ever looked his companion in the face; and had not Douglass been doomed—fated, to become a victim, he might have read dishonesty on his very face. Now he was established in his house as his old school-fellow, he knew Julia would, to please him, pay him every attention; that thus he should admit a stranger into his confidence, and the unguarded heart of his wife would be liable to be assailed by this cold, heartless, crafty man. Douglass saw that Walsingham had some view in visiting him, and that he had brought the letter merely as a pretext; however he had strengthened his approaches—whatever his views might be, he was now going a fair road on which he might exercise his skill. Julia and Douglass dined at home, and for the first time since their

marriage the latter began to feel dull after dinner; their usual amusement, chess, had no charms for him, and he could not animate himself sufficiently to relate anecdotes as he sat at her feet, his head resting in her lap, as was his customary mode when she was inclined to kill an hour in knitting a purse, and believing she was usefully employed.

Douglass escaped unscathed or unobserved. Julia suggested that Paris, gay as it was, might still be stupid, and she hinted the trip to Naples as more conducive to amusement than idling away the time in France. Douglass suspected that she had discovered his falsehood, and he hardly dared to look her in the face; but he answered that the winter had now begun, that she was too delicate to undertake so long a journey, and that Houghton, indisposed already, and suffering from cold, could not safely be removed from their present residence; but that he was ready to acquiesce in any arrangements she might wish to make, for that all places were the same to him as long as Julia was there.

She patted his head, and they passed the evening after that remark in a more social style; so easy is it to lead the heart of an affectionate woman even by the simplest words!

At a quarter to six the following day Walsingham called. Julia was in the salon, for Douglass had not quite completed his toilet, and his friend availed himself of the few minutes to pour in a tide of compliments in regard to Douglass: he spoke of him as one who promised to make a figure in after life from his abilities at school, and really played the part so well that no woman alive could have penetrated the false veil he wore. The child was in the room; of course he asked to see it, and as he took it in his arm and patted the little child's fat rosy cheek, he said, in a careless manner, "Well, my little cherub, and so like your mamma, too! What's your little name, dear?"

The child was too young to speak; but Julia, with a mother's fondness, answered, "Say Houghton, little dear!" She looked up, and Walsingham's face was as white as snow; she snatched the infant from his hands, for it was crying, returned it to the nurse, and then instantly turned her attention to her guest and offered him some wine: Walsingham said it was nothing but a spasm to which he had been much subject since his arrival in France, and which he attributed to the light wines. At this moment Douglass entered, and being quite prepared and the time nearly expired, they left the room, Douglass promising to be back early. This was the first time that he had dined out without

his wife since their marriage, and he felt at every step that he was preparing the way to a little connubial coolness.

It was dark and it rained; the salon was immediately opposite, and they crossed without an idea that Julia's window overlooked the entrance, and that a lamp, dim, it is true, like all the lamps at Paris, but yet sufficient to show the forms if not the faces of those who passed under it, illumined the entrance. Julia saw them: she, with all the affection of a loving woman, had waited to see the carriage pass, but she heard no roll of wheels; she knew her husband took no umbrella—the wind was high, and the rain pattered against the windows—she saw, and no doubt she recognised them, as they passed under the arch which leads through the court to the door.

They were just in time; the company had assembled—the receiving-room was full. When the doors opened and dinner was announced, the little count, leading the brother of a celebrated minister to a foreign court through the hazard, the rouge-et-noir rooms, to the dinner apartment, was followed by the rest in rather a rush than a deliberate movement: each man seemed anxious to arrive as soon as possible, not so much with the idea of losing a mouthful, as of procuring a place free from the draughts of air which forced themselves through the heated room whenever the door was opened. Douglass was much struck with the elegance of the table: a long plateau, richly ornamented, ran nearly the whole length; the room was well lighted, and the candelabra were in the best taste. A profusion of wine was on the table, and he had the curiosity to remark that only twenty-eight people sat down to dinner, and that there were no less than fourteen bottles of Champagne, besides common wines, on the table. The Sherry and Madeira were handed round.

On one side of him sat Walsingham; on the other was a middle-sized man of about fifty, but with a quickness of eye which became youth more than sobered manhood: but of the other guests he could not but remark that the haggard countenances bespoke the victims from whose pockets all this glare and gold was supported. There is something in the countenance of an Englishman which any observer would recognise at a glance: they have neither the round, fat, solemn face of the German, the sharp monkey cut of the French, the dark olive hue of the Spaniard, the heavy gaze of the Swede, the downward glance of the Russian, the small eyes of the Tartar, nor the excellent chisel of the Italian; but they have faces cut between the German and the Danish, being nearer the latter than

any. The half bald-headed companion on Douglass's right broke down the barrier of English reserve, and thus began:

"I am afraid the weather" (an Englishman must begin with that) "has turned to a determined rain, and Paris will be as nice a sheet of mud as a man need paddle through."

"It is rather a bad night," replied Douglass, "and seems much inclined to continue."

"Le vermicelle d'Italie au blanc de veau," said one of the waiters, offering soup.

Douglass took it; whilst another following, offered Walsingham "la Chantilly aux croutons."

"This," said Douglass to his new acquaintance, "is excellent: one reads of magnificent entertainments, but I never anticipated seeing any thing half so splendid as this. Surely the expenses of this establishment must be prodigious; for these dinners, I believe, take place twice a week."

"La culotte de bœuf à l'allemande," Douglass refused. "La truite de lac, sauce génévoise," he accepted.

"Quite right," replied the stranger; "and it comes out of young gentlemen's pockets like yours. I wonder who did you so bad a service as to introduce you here? Take my advice and don't come here again: if you do, these croupiers will take the starch out of you, I promise you."

"I must play for them to use me so badly," replied Douglass; "and that is not my present intention."

"I fancy," continued the stranger, "you would have been none the poorer if you had thought of that two nights ago."

"Les dindonneaux à la Godard," Douglass could not refuse; whilst his companion amused himself with playing a little with some "jambon glacé aux épinards."

Douglass could not help smiling at the good-natured manner his new friend was pleased to hint at his ruin, and little did he dream at that moment how near he was to perdition: he was fairly in the whirlpool, but in the intoxication of the twirl he did not feel himself sinking.

"Are you aware of the expense of this establishment?" he resumed; "for I cannot imagine how it can be supported."

"Indeed!" replied the bald-headed friend. "Then you may fancy how well it does answer when I tell you that the company to whom this vagabond infamous establishment belongs pay the first of every month as a tax to the city of Paris twenty thousand pounds sterling, no less a sum than six millions of francs annually: then comes the salaries of the different commissioners; —that, for instance, of the little man is——"

"Les petits vol-au-vents aux huitres?"—No.

"La timbale de nouilles à la mongla."—Oui.

"—Twenty thousand francs. Sixteen thousand is paid to that tall handsome man opposite to him; the same to that little fat gentleman. Thirty-six francs is paid every night to each of the croupiers, with a handsome remuneration at Christmas if *all goes well.* Do you understand?" he continued as he touched Douglass with his sharp elbow; "*if all goes well.* Then the rent of the house is about forty-five thousand francs a year.—Look at these domestics—half of them are ready to lend you a thousand francs, although you are, you suppose, a stranger.—Then, these dinners, the papers, reviews, fires, lights, suppers. Add up all that, my young gentleman, if you can, without a slate; and then fancy what chance you can have of winning, when the odds must be so much against you, or how could this gaudy establishment exist?"

"Le chaud froid de perdreaux à la gelée?"—Douglass nodded a dissent.

"La noix de veau piquée, purée de céleri."—No.

"Is all that sum," asked Douglass, "expended on this establishment alone?"

"Oh, no," interrupted Walsingham; "they have a dozen others: the devil is not quite so black as he is painted."

"There are four or five other licensed plunder abodes," continued the stranger; "and in those haunts of iniquity, as well as here, every man is watched who enters: not Cerberus himself with his triple-head watching the other hell, or Argus with his hundred eyes, can surpass in vigilance these attendants. By heavens! I have often thought that they had eight eyes, like spiders."

"Les poulets à la reine à l'ivoire."—Douglass shrugged his shoulders.

"Les filets de volaille aux truffes."

"Try that," said the stranger, "and let us have some Champagne; you will find that and water the best beverage, for it has not the acidity of the 'vin ordinaire,' and robs the wine of some of its dangerous strength: to drink much here, is to heat a furnace to burn your own fingers."

"I do not observe," continued Douglass, "that we are watched: who are the spies?"

"You will find that better displayed next door at Frascati's," said the elderly stranger. "This hint will suffice: as you enter, you will leave your hat and cloak at the door;—now, although hundreds pass in and out of the rooms, yet you will

find that although you pass through in a moment and remain an hour, yet the waiters in attendance will give you your own cloak and hat from the hundreds which are hanging around them: like George the Fourth, they never speak to a man whom they do not remember. But take my advice, don't play."

"But," answered Douglass, "I intend to play upon a *system*."

"They say," returned the new friend with much sharpness, —"they say in common life, a man is never ruined until he is married; and here a man is never quite lost until he has discovered a system. As Adam says to Orlando, 'this house is but a butchery; avoid it, fear it, do not enter it.'"

"Then why do you come here yourself, sir, if you enact the scarecrow to others?"

"Le filet de bœuf à la broche, sauce madére."—"Oui." Walsingham took "les côtelettes de mouton à la jardiniere," a dish he much recommended, for he ate gloriously and drank amazingly.

"To continue my observations upon human nature," he replied, "there is no field for it like a den of gamesters. Your lover is but cold in feeling to your gamester—your hero in war would shrink from the cool desperation yon pale haggard fellow would commit. The words of the satirist fall divested of their venom upon ears accustomed to the dice-box; and the sparkles of wit or the glance of beauty are ineffectual upon either the head or heart of a determined player. To him the voice of reason is unavailing, the brilliancy of beauty has no effect: his heart is hardened by this worst of all excitements, and the voice of humanity calls in vain on the skeleton of human nature."

"I feel very much obliged to you," said Walsingham, with a slight colour on his cheek, "for the amiable picture you have chosen to draw of people who frequent this house."

"Les filets de sols, à la horly, sauce tomate." Douglass was satiated. The following waiter offered "les cuisses de volaille à la bellevue;" but he was hors de combat; although another and another came, one offering "la chartreuse de langues de mouton," and the other, "les perches de Seine à la waterfich;" when the first course was removed, and the second brought.

"If the cap fits, Walsingham," replied the stranger, you can wear it. Perhaps the death of Rockingham would bear out my statement, and I fancy you know all about him. I never saw so dreadful a finish in my life; and it is really horrible to imagine the misery he occasioned to his father."

"He changed his name before he died," said Walsingham; "and that saved the old gentleman the disgrace he would other-

wise have experienced. For myself, I don't shoot until I am sure of the gallows or starvation."

"And you will change your name *again*, I suppose, before that *accords* with your feelings."

"Les poulets au cresson"—"Les perdreaux rouges bardés ?" asked the nimble waiters.

Douglass now felt himself upon tender ground concerning Harry Houghton; and from old Houghton's story, he imagined that his elderly friend and Walsingham must have been the two persons present at the suicide's last carouse. He thought it most prudent not to know any thing about the matter, although he remarked the crimson which covered Walsingham's face as the words "change your name *again*" were uttered, and his remarkably inquisitive look towards Douglass when the suicide's fate was mentioned: he therefore changed the conversation by asking "if no one gained who played here."

"Oh, yes!" replied the elderly gentleman; "they gain days of uneasiness, and nights of sleepless anxiety, but no money. I hope you will lose at first—that may deaden your system; but if you gain I do not know any man more likely to be ruined than yourself. Take the advice of one who has seen in this place the affluent become beggars—the happy miserable: do not attempt to launch into a vortex which must destroy you. When you, like me, have had the sway of thousands—when age, and distress, and misfortune have inflicted upon you half the miseries they have showered upon my poor old bald pate,—for I am a grandfather, young as I may appear,—then you may be trusted to look upon these heaps of gold—to pity those who sigh to possess them, and despise those," and he looked at Walsingham, "who obtain them unjustly. Now take what wine you require, for the custom here is not to wait long after dinner, and they only hand round claret once or twice."

"Then before we go, my dear sir, may I ask," said Douglass, "who is that gentleman on the right of the count?"

"That is," he replied, "the Duke de T——, brother of the man who has sworn allegiance to sixteen different governments,—a man of wonderful appetite, but the kindest and most amiable man alive. He has never altered the fashion of his dress for the last half-century: he is a man held in general estimation, wears a pigtail, eats much, plays little, is always courteous, and ever obliging. Now you know all about *him*."

"Now," continued Douglass, "who is that little hard-featured man next to the duke, and who wears that common decoration of the legion of honour?"

"That," replied the cicerone, "is an admiral of great reputation and little reward: he has circumnavigated the globe, and has adorned science by the depth of his knowledge and the perseverance of his inquiries: he is familiar with all societies, but he was never in a more motley group than the present."

"Well, one more, then, a glass of claret, and I have done," said Douglass. "Who is that remarkably handsome man with mustachios, who looks like Apollo amongst the Laplanders? I do not think I ever saw such a specimen of creation in my life, saving that he savours of sadness and is tinged with dejection?"

"He is an Englishman," was the reply; "and far better would it be for him to let the light of his countenance fall upon woman's eyes, than to lose their lustre at the hazard-table. He was much handsomer a week ago; but latterly he has been losing that which he can ill afford, and borrowing what he can never repay,—without, indeed, some Venus descends, like Jupiter, in a shower of gold as his wife."

"The Danaë being, I presume," answered Walsingham, "a *hazard*."

"Just so; but don't pun—it's worse than gaming.—Now look at that gentlemanly personage with the air of a soldier and a face of defiance. He is just as great a goose as yourself;—don't start;—he had a system, he lost 60,000*l.* in two months; he had a large fortune, and now two hundred a year would be high bidding for all that is left."

"Ah!" answered Douglass, "he never played upon my system."

"Play upon your fiddlestick!" grunted the old gentleman. "Do you think you are going to discover a system to beat a certainty?—do you suppose all these gray-headed sinners have not pondered over every chance, and made every calculation, and yet find the pull of the table overcome them all? The doubling system is a fallacy when the stakes are limited; the pull in favour of the bank is a certainty."

"What may it be in proportion to the relative games?" inquired Douglass.

"At hazard," he replied, "it is about one and three quarters per cent. against the players; at rouge-et-noir, variable between four and seven per cent.; at roulette, seventeen per cent. or rather more; and at *creps* with the three dice, it is not one jot less than thirty per cent. But come into the coffee-room, and I will give you a few hints and endeavour to get you out of this cursed hell without being much hurt."

CHAPTER XVII.

Servants attended and poured out the "sober berry juice" from an urn; after which, those who relished liqueurs went to another table and had their choice of any they might please to name. The whole establishment was well conducted; and if they plundered you, they plundered you very genteelly. All ranks of society were to be found in this *regiment of rifles*, and it would have been fastidiousness indeed to have complained of the spread; the dinner was always as good as that from curiosity mentioned—of course only having given the principal *entrées*, for there was a profusion of sweets and a splendid dessert.

The play begins early on those nights when dinners are given; and Douglass soon found Walsingham much inclined to keep him in sight. He seemed by no means pleased with the new acquaintance, and he watched him rather too closely to please Douglass. Twice Walsingham asked him if he intended to play; but as he was more attached to his new friend, and he liked not the allusion to Rockingham and the change of name, he wished to glean some more intelligence both concerning the establishment, and of Walsingham, before he began upon his system. And this was done not without a great sacrifice on the part of Douglass; he felt eagerly anxious to play, but the word ruin!—ruin!—ruin! had been so often repeated by the elderly gentleman, that he took it as a second edition of the gipsy's prophecy.

"You seem, sir," said Douglass to his dinner friend, "to be acquainted with every man in the room; surely you must have been many years a resident in Paris, for I never remember to have heard any Englishman, with the exception of the eldest son of a certain marquis, who spoke so fluently or so elegantly as yourself." He bowed and answered,

"I have had my chances and changes in this mortal life; and if I were to tell you my history, you would not wonder at my acquaintance with the language: suffice it to say, that I come here to get rid of myself. I am under no apprehension as to

losing my money,—that's all gone already. I never lost it here, or next door,—I never gamed: there are many modes of being ruined without gaming, but none so short and so sure. Do you see that old broken-down man so busily employed marking a card and not playing? He is an Englishman of high rank in the army,—he was a man of large fortune, and is one of the many victimised here. He was reduced to the most abject poverty, for many weeks became a beggar to the very men who had plundered him: they rejected his petition, until some others of our countrymen interfered, and they now allow him five francs a day, which is all he has to subsist upon; and yet such is the infatuation of this terrible vice, that you see him there, decrepit with age and misfortune, hovering round the table at which he is forbid to play, and marking every time the different colours win, with as much eagerness as if thousands depended upon the card. But I will take you to Frascati's by-and-by; and there I can show you one or two more who lower over the paradise of their imagination, the flimsy cloud of their own misfortunes. —That fine-looking man yonder is one of Napoleon's best generals; he is just returned from Portugal; he has a system, and he is half ruined. See how he rubs the gold between his fingers, as if loath to part with his old friend, knowing he never will see it again! Observe how the manliness of his features is disturbed, and fancy what he suffers by playing."

"Not so much as I do," replied Douglass, "from shunning it."

At this moment Walsingham went near the table to speak to some one, and Douglass said, "Who is that man who brought me here?"

Before, however, the stranger could utter more than "Avoid him!" he was back at their side, and he never left Douglass for one moment. About midnight he retired to his hotel a loser of about thirty thousand francs: it was between the conversation and the loss that Douglass visited Frascati's.

This sink of iniquity has often been described, and the description here shall be brief. The victims enter an antechamber in which are some four or five servants, all ready to divest them of either hat or cloak; and it is during this second of time that the person is so well watched by these active Cerberuses, that no one enters who is not known, and no one departs who is not marked. In the first room is roulette,—a game admirably adapted for the despairing gambler, as he replenishes his purse, if Fortune favours him, at one *coup*; in the next room is rouge-et-noir; and in a third is creps,—a species of hazard

played with three dice, the odds being immense against the player. But, as if the excitement of play was not sufficient to lure the eager youngster, women of a certain—or rather, uncertain description are admitted: but seldom does the face of beauty shed a momentary glare over this wretched institution; those who have the *entrée* are neither fascinating enough to cause the unwary to play, or the wary to love. In such a place, the charms must be great to excite attention; for the eyes of many are on the women to see that they endeavour to lure a victim, not to their arms, but to the gripe of the croupier.

The little ivory ball of roulette performs its various gyrations in the cylinder, the croupiers calling "Faites le jeux,—ça va, ça va," until the last quick eye of the regulator, perceiving that the ball is about to touch one of the little brass nobs, calls out, "Rien va plus!" in hops the little ball into a nook, the number of which, whether odd or even, its colour, &c. being declared aloud, the winner, if such there be, is paid his apparently exorbitant proportions, and the long rakes soon transfer the money of the loser to the grasp of the croupier.

The women surround this table, and venture to predict the number likely to win; enticing the man who perhaps is more captivated by the eyes of the seducer than the excitement of the game, to venture a little, and then a little more, until at last he becomes night after night a constant attendant, when the tardy remittances to Lafitte warn him of the necessity of return, and that necessity saves him from actual ruin.

At this hell Douglass never felt inclined to gamble; the room was too crowded, and the constant interruption of the women, stretching their bare arms to snatch the gained five francs, rather disturbed calculation than excited precipitation.

Could he have been reclaimed, here was the place. He heard several who had lingered near this fatal table giving vent to their feelings, and describing their loss in the usual off-hand manner: "Done brown!" said one;—"Cleaned out!" said another;—"Not a cowry remaining!" said a third;—"I'm off!" said a fourth. But amidst all the complaining some jokes escaped. One old Frenchman, who had been busily marking a card, at last screwed up his resolution to a proper pitch, and having said, "Now it is sure—now I must win!" he poked down the remaining money standing before him: his certainty was fallacious,—he lost; and immediately he rose and *sacré'd* most violently, declaring himself the most unfortunate man in

the whole world; and running his head against the mantelpiece, he began to batter his brains.

An Irishman who watched this unusual conduct at first said that the man was blinded by misfortune; but an Englishman, who corrected him, declared the man was not blind, but in the agony of acknowledged ruin. "Then, by Jasus!" replied the first, "he's afraid to look up on his ruin, and he wants to get a *wall eye!*"

"I'll just try my luck for a few notes," said a tall handsome young man, whom Douglas recognised as the one pointed out to him at the Salon: he placed a five hundred franc note on the red.

"Faites le jeu!—Le jeu est fait!" continued the ever-active croupier. Away went the cards. "Trois," said the little man; again a second row of cards, and "Cinq" was the result. "Rouge perd et la couleur!" and away went the note.

"This is the wrong side," said the Englishman; and he placed a billet of one thousand francs on the black.

Again the little man murmured, "Faites le jeu!—Le jeu est fait!" aud dealing the first row, said "Sept;" then came the second, "Quatre." "Rouge gagne, couleur perd!" and the one thousand note followed that of the five hundred.

"Sharp work!" said he.

"I think so," replied Douglass; and having wasted half an hour, during which time the company had changed once or twice, he went to the antechamber, and received his own hat, although there must have been two hundred people at least in the room. Douglass was quite satisfied that the old gentleman had not deceived him, and that every man who entered into that house was a marked man. He then returned to the Salon.

Is there such a thing as fate? if so, Douglass might have been happy. And why should he deny the creed? does not the Mussulman who places his neck in the bowstring believe in it, and dies happy? When the bastinado is applied, does not the belief in the preordination fortify him against the pain? when his house is burnt, his harem violated, his disgrace certain, does he not quietly smoke his chibouk, and as he mutters the word "Takdeer" (destiny), bows with submission, to what he believes unavoidable?

It is thus the foolish would reconcile themselves to their folly under the umbrella of predestination; and we scarcely ever met a gamester who was not tinctured with this belief. But if we are responsible agents, fearful is the catalogue of crime against

the man who impoverishes his wife and family; robs, or is sure to wish so to do; and after wasting life with scarcely one atoning virtue, finishes his career by suicide.

Douglass had this portrait before him. He knew the results of gaming; and yet, strange to say, he fell. He would not avoid it, even if he could. This is written to make others shudder—to scare the greedy speculators from a place where ruin sits on sofas, and wretchedness is reflected in the mirror. And now to return home with a lie in his mouth, and smelling of a gaming-house!

The next morning Douglass arose pale and feverish. It was necessary to write to Verity in order that he might sell out some stock to replace the money lost. And here again he turned every idea into one of deception. He hardly knew what course to pursue. At last it occurred to him to say that he had acceded to the wish of his wife in purchasing some French furniture, some Sèvres porcelain, and so forth, for Longdale, and that he hoped her fit of extravagance was now at an end. He begged him to place the money as quickly as possible in the hands of his London banker, as he was anxious to continue his tour into Italy, more especially as he did not think the air of Paris agreed with his wife.

Depend upon it, there is nothing like a lie with a circumstance attached to it; you are sure to deceive even your worst enemy. Douglass had despatched this letter before breakfast; and when he saw Julia enter with a downcast dejected look, he felt as if he had occasioned the change. "My child! my child!" he began, as if feeling for the infant, not one thought of whom had troubled his frenzy, "is he worse, Julia?—is poor dear little Houghton worse?"

She took his hand, and kissed his cheek; her eyes were suffused with tears; and when she said, "Thank God, the baby is better!" she seemed to hint that Douglass betrayed symptoms of illness.

"You are ill, Robert," she continued: the eye of affection can soon discover sickness in the person of a husband. "What time last night—" and, as if afraid to continue, she stopped.

"No, my dear," he replied, "not particularly. I have, I think, caught a little cold, which I hope will leave me before the day is over—But how did the child sleep?—Why, *you* look pale and haggard."

"I did not sleep at all last night. I waited to hear you return, and—"

"Why, Julia, my dear! what can ail you! why this hasty check? you seem as if afraid to speak; what has become of your usual curiosity? would you not like to hear of Walsingham's dinner?"

"No!" she replied, with unusual energy: "I have no curiosity to pry into the secrets of others."

If Douglass had not known himself the villain he felt himself to be, he might have been alarmed at the difference of manner in Julia, so very unusual in one who always counted the minutes he was absent; who knew his step, and rushed to meet him; whose whole soul seemed wrapped up in the words of her husband.

"Then I will tell you, without your prying," he said, with a laugh. "We dined at Véry's in the Palais Royal; and never did I witness more hospitality than from Walsingham. We were only six at dinner."

"Stop! stop!" said Julia, "in pity's sake, stop! I do not want to hear one word more; do not—do not make me eternally miserable! Let me implore you, stop!"

"This is most strange, my dear Julia! Are my occupations—my little amusements uninteresting to you? are you so changed, that even your tears must fall when I would fain amuse you?"

"It is for your own sake," replied Julia, "that I will not hear; it is that I should not be made miserable by ceasing to admire you. Tell me, Robert, frankly, have I ever since the day we married occasioned you one bitter moment,—have I ever failed in the duty of a true and affectionate wife?"

"Good God!" said Robert, rather alarmed, "are you mad, Julia?—what can be the upshot of this eloquence?"

"I ask you," continued the poor thing, sobbing, "have I ever failed in my duty to you?"

"No, certainly not," he replied; "and I hope this is mutual: I trust you will exonerate me."

There was no answer, but she cried and sobbed most piteously: at last she continued, "Oh, heavens! that we, who have every luxury on earth, should thus be made miserable!—that we, who have known as much happiness as the world could shower upon us, must perhaps eat the bread of labour, and exchange all our comforts for penury and disgust! That the sayings of a gipsy should be realised!—that—"

"Why, Julia, my love," he interrupted, "surely my ears deceived me! Can you be frightened at a shadow?—can the words of a gipsy cause all these tears—all these apprehensions?"

"No, Robert, no; I am not the simpleton to believe in any such shilling prophecies. But come here," she said; and taking him by the arm, she led him to the window. "Do you see that house opposite?" she continued. Douglass felt the flesh creep upon his bones. "Nay, answer me; what house is *that?*"

"Do you take me, Julia," he replied, "for Galignani's Paris Guide, that I should know each house in the street? Why, what can make you so moved at the sight of a house you must have seen for a month! Really this is too silly! If you want to know, I can easily ask the question."

"Will you promise me, Robert, never to enter that house?"

"To be sure, my dear. Why should I wish to enter a house to which I am a stranger, and in which—"

"Stop—stop, Robert; I hardly dare to tell you; and yet I feel I should be wanting in my own duty if I hesitated. Do not, I pray you, make me know the truth of the last line of the gipsy's prophecy."

"Still," he interrupted, "harping upon that precious doggrel."

"Still and for ever," she continued. "Tell me, Robert, what would you say to me if I told you an untruth, when your own eyes had witnessed the occurrence, and you knew I was saying what was false?"

"I should *despise* you."

"Nay, nay, any other word but that, Robert; choose from out the whole catalogue of the dictionary, but omit that word—that recorded, hated word. I will not let you fall into the error your consideration for me has prompted you to do. When you left me last night with that man, for whom I have entertained a decided hatred, notwithstanding his compliments, I ran to the window to see even the carriage which contained my own, my dear Robert. The rain fell fast, the night was dark and windy; and yet, as Heaven is my judge, I saw you and your friend cross the street and enter that house. Nay, look,—our window commands that which lightens the staircase; the lamp shone bright, and I saw you and Walsingham enter the door on the right hand. Believing you had called for some other friend, I waited to see you return; I stood at this window fixed as a monument until half-past eight o'clock, when, just as I was about to give poor Houghton what he required, I saw you and your *friend* leave that house and enter the next. I returned from the greatest pleasure a mother experiences, to the greatest

curse a wife can know. I saw you leave the second house, and with a hurried step again enter that house. The waiter happened to come in at the moment; I asked him to whom that residence belonged: imagine my horror when I learnt that those two buildings contributed to ruin young Houghton; and that you—for I saw you go in—you were now in the mesh from which few ever escaped! I could not sleep; I waited and waited half frantic, when at two o'clock I saw you pass the lamp at the entrance and cross the street: I hurried to my room and prayed; but sleep has been a stranger to me. I know the danger by which we are surrounded; and, Robert, hate me not for that which led to the discovery, for it was founded on affection matured by love. Now I fear the child will suffer from my fretting and my apprehension. I dare not send for a nurse, for the medical attendant declared any change in Houghton's case might be fatal."

"And you watched me, Julia, in order to convict me—to lessen me in your own estimation—to hold me in check—to extract the falsehood, and then to beard me with the truth?"

"Oh! just heaven, what misery—what fresh misery is in store for me! I told you, Robert, that the wish to see even the carriage that conveyed you first tempted me to the window: now it becomes a mother's duty to avoid that irritation of mind which might poison the stream of Houghton's existence; and my only mode of avoiding it is thus—" (and she threw herself upon her knees,)—"to pray—to implore you to forgive me an apparent curiosity—to restore me to your good opinion—to believe me incapable of duplicity, and as fond and as affectionate as on that day which saw us united.—Oh!" she said, as he raised her from the floor, and as she threw her arms round his neck; "leave this place—leave this hated spot: better would it be to *risk* the life of Houghton by moving, than of insuring it by remaining here. Even now I should give the natural sustenance to our son, and I dare not; I much fear I have already increased the mischief: but you, Robert, must make *me* happy, and then he will thrive."

Douglass scarcely knew what to do—what to say. Here this excellent creature, instead of branding him with the infamy he deserved, was soliciting pardon for a proof of affection, since that affection had led to a discovered duplicity on his part. He was overcome by shame: he felt the guilt which was justly attached to him; and after kissing her fondly, he endeavoured to soothe her into quietude.

"Oh! generous Robert," she continued, "thus to forgive my first fault: but do—pray do leave Paris. How often have I thought over the history of young Houghton! But he was different to you, for he hated his wife: but you, Robert, you still love me; and although I fancy I see a slight alteration, yet that must be in the vexation of loss, or the displeasure at the discovery. I hope before to-morrow's sun has set we shall be far away from here."

"I cannot go yet, my dear," replied Douglass; "I have written to Verity for some money which it is absolutely requisite to have, and until I get that letter it would be impossible to leave Paris."

"Then grant me this one request," she continued: "promise me never to place your foot inside that door again. Remember to what you owe your prosperity, and let not the same means lead to adversity and poverty. I feel as a mother ought: I know that Houghton and myself have no settlement or entailment; that when once the inroad is made upon the principal, the rest is in jeopardy. Do you remember, when you first warned me against extravagance, your remark, that although the ship was large and strong, one plank might lead her to destruction; that the citadel was safe until the smallest breach was made in the wall;—in short, as the French say, 'Ce ne que le premier pas qui coûte?' I do hope," she continued, "that your loss has not been severe: and if this infatuation has so entirely taken possession of you, do now that which will make your family secure—that which will place us beyond want, should you persevere in this course of destruction. Now forgive me, Robert, and I will see the child."

He kissed her again and again; he regarded her as his guardian angel: he felt that a hand was extended to save him from the overwhelming wave, and he became in lighter spirits and in merrier mood.

In the mean time an alteration had taken place for the worse in little Houghton, and Douglass was warned by the medical attendant on no account to allow the slightest thing to agitate his wife: in fact, he mentioned that he did not regard his child as free from danger, but he hoped that his skill was sufficient to surmount the obstacles. He promised to call in the evening, and scarcely had he left the house before Mr. Walsingham was announced.

The conversation had reference to that hell which he had latterly frequented. In all his words he evidently endeavoured to

defend the system, and to show that many had been very successful; that they only saw the shadows, whereas the substance was away revelling in riches. He added, that the Salon was supported by those timid players who were scared at their first loss, and who wanted the common courage of the Spaniard to risk a little more in order to recover themselves. He ridiculed all the wise saws of the elderly gentleman, whom he represented as a disappointed person, and who had suffered from a want of common caution in play.

"Your system," he added, "must succeed: but you must remember to adhere to your own rules; it was by infringing those that you suffered so much last night." He then quietly hinted that he intended to avail himself of Douglass's kind invitation to dinner. This, however, was parried on account of Houghton's indisposition, postponing the *pleasure* until a future occasion.

Douglass had previous to this visit made a fixed determination never to enter that place again; but, alas! even Walsingham had power to shake his resolution. He pondered over his words. He thought himself already one infirm of purpose; he regarded himself as a craven coward; and he shook from his heart the persuasions of Julia, and the imbecilities of affection. He passed the day in idle vacancy; he had no spirit to undertake any work; he heard the medical gentleman when he warned him of the change in Houghton for the worse, with listless indifference: so true is the sentence, "where the treasure is, there is the heart also."

In the mean time the hours dragged on through the day, and, after many soothing medicines, Houghton fell asleep: and no sooner was Julia aware that her presence could be dispensed with, than she flew to her husband. Douglass had not seen the boy for the whole day, and now she insisted on his visiting the cradle, in order to see how much altered he was. With cautious step they moved from room to room: at last he stood by his son. There lay the emblem of innocence, his face ruddy with fever, his little lips apart, and yet so slightly came the breath as to be almost inaudible. In vain the nurse covered the little arms now emaciated by sickness, the heated infant soon released itself from the enthralment; whilst the danger of its awaking rendered it expedient to use some lighter covering. Julia took a scarf which she wore round her neck and placed it over the exposed limbs. She grasped her husband's hand, and having dismissed the attendant, knelt by the side of the cradle and lifted up her hands in earnest prayer. Douglass did

the same. He knelt, and in the fulness of his heart he poured out his soul before Him who humbles the proud and who succours the distressed. He saw the tears course down the smooth cheek of his young wife, and he found his own bursting from their concealment. He prayed; and Heaven is witness how fervent—how sincere were his prayers. They rose; and as he gazed on the little innocent creature, Julia's soft voice stole above the stillness, and he heard her say,

"To what wretchedness does a momentary wildness lead! I would not upbraid you, Robert, when I see that the spark of affection still burns within your bosom. Look at your child; already has the warning voice of the physician told me of the danger, already must you perceive how much of life has left that dear infant's breast. Oh! what should, what should I do, if it were taken from me!—I am told to be composed," she said as her tears ran in torrents from her eyes; "but no one can command obedience when the heart is sad, and yet could I be happy if I felt that you were so? But no, Robert; that sunken eye, that haggard look, that compressed lip, seem to indicate the resolution of despair. If so, gather greater resolution from your wife, who, if the branch is severed from the parent tree, will bow in all submission to Him who inflicts the blow, and cling the closer to him whose duty it is to shelter and protect her." Douglass made an effort to speak; but the child turned restlessly in the cradle. "Hush, hush, my love!" said Julia, as she placed her finger to her lips; "hush, hush, dearest!" and she beckoned him from the apartment.

CHAPTER XVIII.

That no man can understand the power of the lure of gaming without he be a gamester, is certain. The scene described in the last chapter, although of course far, far from the reality—for no man can write an emphasis, as a learned lawyer once said—was sufficient to have cowered any heart. Douglass saw his child asleep, 'tis true, but in a fevered slumber; he had been told of the probable event, and that nothing but the restoration of peace to the mind of Julia afforded the slightest hope of recovery. Even with these dreadful warnings rung in his ears, he stole from his bed at midnight, crossed the way, and returned again the loser

of about four thousand pounds. It seemed one eternal tide of misfortune; and when for a moment the flood-tide of success occurred, he was so beaten by the contiuned loss that he feared to avail himself of it; whereas, whenever the ebb began to run, he flew in the face of the inconstant goddess, and endeavoured to shame her to his service by showing how daringly he combated her power. This rule ought to be engraven on every gamester's mind: "When losing, be chary of your stakes, be moderate in your bets; when winning, be generous, be bold, and success *may* follow."

It is useless to return to the misery of home: the peace once violated, mistrust once engendered, suspicions once entertained, and affection must be shaken. It was singular how exactly he had trodden as yet in the paths of young Houghton, excepting that he still loved his wife. Day after day lingered on; when to the great *delight* of Douglass, he heard of the death of his best friend, to whom alone he could have applied for advice and assistance. He was sitting with his forehead on his hands, cursing his folly and his fortune, when he received the following letter from Mr. Verity's partner.

"Argyle Street, 14 December, 18—.

"Dear Sir,

"It becomes a painful duty of mine to announce to you the demise of my late very lamented partner Mr. Verity. His death was occasioned by a cold caught in the service of one of his clients, which, settling on his lungs, soon overcame his constitution, and after lingering in great pain about six weeks, he expired the day after the reception of your letter. In conformity with your desire, I enclose you the money required.

"Mr. Verity was sufficiently himself to read your letter; and he most earnestly requested me to urge upon you the necessity of settling your landed property, with a portion of your funded money, on your son Houghton; and I promised him to use all the influence of a stranger in order to complete so desirable an end. Mr. Verity, who took a great interest in yourself and your welfare, implored me to urge your return to England; and I promised him that when I received your instructions, not a moment should be lost in completing the deed, the rough copy of which has already been drawn by Mr. Verity. I urge this the more strongly upon you at this moment, because I am about to withdraw from business, feeling myself quite unable to carry it on with that talent of which death has deprived me. I therefore beg you will, as soon as convenient, give me the necessary

instructions, or name some firm to whom I shall consign your title-deeds, &c. &c. Of course fresh powers of attorney will be requisite, in order that your solicitors may receive your dividends, &c. With my best compliments to Mrs. Douglass, I am, sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"Richard Honor."

Douglass was overjoyed at this news: it released him from all the shackles of the law; he was a free man, and in the liberty he acquired he forgot the meanness, the heartless, the shameless ingratitude which caused him to smile with devilish satisfaction when the friend of his benefactor—nay, *his* best friend, was suddenly taken from him. He was in the state of high exultation when Julia entered, and even her sorrowing countenance brightened when she saw him so excited.

"What good news has Robert for his Julia?" she began, "that now he looks himself again. See, see what a quiet night can produce devoid of the excitement of gaming. What! not one kiss for your own dear Julia? and am I so altered that I must solicit my morning's welcome?"

He kissed her; then putting on all the hypocrisy of man's nature, managed to pretend to weep, to "mimic sorrow when the heart was not sad;" and after uttering one or two words preparatory to breaking the news, he placed the letter in Julia's hand, and she read it.

"Another heavy blow!" she began: "that man was our protector,—his honesty, his candour was our shield. But here is no time to be lost, Robert—you must go to town this evening; by delay your affairs may become embarrassed, and I need not urge upon you how strongly I feel the necessity of your complying with Mr. Verity's last advice. Houghton is better, and I have great hopes that all will yet be well.—But come, Robert, although we never have parted since our marriage, yet now I see the necessity, I shall not fret: moreover, as I hope it will make your mind easier when you have settled your affairs, I will do my utmost to keep up my spirits and to recover my boy; he is now considered out of all present danger, and I shall write to you every post. If you have time, run down to Longdale, and look," she added with a smile which well conveyed her meaning, "at old Houghton's monument."

It so happened that a place in the *malle poste* was vacant; and, willing not to lose a moment, Douglass determined to avail himself of that conveyance in preference to his carriage. A

small portmanteau was soon packed, the passport was soon signed, and he spent the rest of the day in fondling his boy and making promises to his wife. Walsingham had called, but had been refused. There was, however, one little event which Douglass had overlooked: in a week's time, bills which he had given for eight thousand pounds would become due, and he had omitted to mention to whom he should remit the money in order that the holder of the bills might receive payment; he had put off the business from day to day, and now had forgotten it. Julia and her husband dined early on the day of departure; at half-past five he left his hotel, having again felt the tenderness of love and experienced the warm delight of affection.

At six o'clock he drove out of the court-yard of the post-office; he jolted over gutters, twisted round corners, and underwent as much exercise in an hour as a fox-hunter gets in a hard run. His companion was a fat Frenchman, who had carefully enveloped himself in about ten coats, had covered his head with a seal-skin cap, and his mouth with a dirty shawl, leaving his nose only visible, through which he contrived to snore when asleep, although he stuffed it with enormous pinches of snuff when awake. His whole time was spent in snoring, snuffing, coughing, and spitting. He once tried a cigar, but Douglass objected; and they never exchanged words until they arrived at Amiens, where they were turned out in a dirty wet street, to walk some distance to the Hotel de la Poste whilst the mail drove on to the post-office, in order that they might be refreshed and reinvigorated by a towel and some coffee.

Douglass had full time for reflection and for the formation of plans. He determined for the future to be the possessor of his own papers, and to allow his bankers to receive his dividends, giving them a power of attorney for that, as well as one to enable them to sell out stock should he require it. The deeds relative to Longdale he resolved to place also at his banker's, so as to have every thing under immediate control; and when he summed up his losses, he found himself already deficient twenty thousand pounds, besides the money owed, with the disease incurable upon him.

With visions of better fortune before him, he dozed into all the slumber one can experience in such a vehicle, and was heartily glad when nine the next night arrived and he could see the light-house of Calais. By ten he was as comfortable as Rignole could make him: and if civility and a good house are conducive to comfort, it will be found where he slept on the night of his arrival.

The sea was calm, the weather fair; the steam-boat made her passage in three hours, and once more he was on English ground, a lodger in Payne's York Hotel. How widely different are the two countries, and yet how close! It is impossible to find within the same distance so marked a contrast as may be seen by merely crossing the water to France.

The next day he was in town; and his first visit was to Mrs. Walton. He found her in the full enjoyment of health, dangling a child of about eighteen months old on her knees, and every now and then making the child say "Papa" for a sugar-plum. She looked the picture of contentment, although by no means so gay and lively as he had known her. By her side, on the sofa, was her sister Amelia, a girl of about eighteen, fresh, rosy, and pretty—a walking image of Louisa during the days of her youth and innocence. He remarked that Louisa was more sedate in her manner, and soon found that she had become serious in religious matters: and by the word "serious" be it understood as endeavouring to describe that "righteousness overmuch" which in our days has become not only so predominant, but so fashionable. Perhaps her former life might have led her to this consolation, for women are mostly in extremes; and that she thus endeavoured to make amends for her former transgressions, as sinners when about to die make friends with their enemies, and by way of cheating the Devil, build an hospital or endow a college, leaving half their own families paupers on the parish.

Her sister was a lively contrast. Whilst the face of one had become habituated to a certain demureness of expression, the other was lit up by the bright eyes of youth and innocence; and he allowed her unreserved remarks to flow from the prettiest lips which ever pouted an impertience.

The reason of Douglass's visit was soon explained. Louisa groaned over the death of Verity, but forgot the loss of her friend in the pious apprehension that he might not have been prepared. She could give Douglass no worldly information; and when he asked about Mr. Honor, he received for answer that he had better "keep his house in order." To a question relative to his sister-in-law and Charles, he only gleaned that they were following "the paths of the wicked—rioting and chambering;" that they lived more like Heathens than Christians, and devoted themselves to Satan by frequenting the assemblies of the sinners.

Amelia kindly gave him more assistance. She assured him that Charles was excessively steady; that Margaret loved him just as much as ever she did, and that she had never yet heard

of the slightest difference having occurred; that Margaret was much admired for her beauty, but no scandal had ever been whispered against her. Douglass soon found that Amelia lent a ready ear to his vivid descriptions of Parisian pleasures; and when he mentioned his intention—for he was not asked—of dining with the Waltons that day, in order to consult Mr. Walton upon business, Amelia declared herself in raptures with the prospect of again listening to the recital of pleasures she so ardently desired to share.

At dinner, Douglass remarked that Walton participated in the gloomy taciturnity of his wife, and he began seriously to think that they esteemed it a sin to be happy. Wine, that generous orator—that revealer of the inmost heart—that dispenser of joy and destroyer of sorrow—that miracle by which the poor believe themselves rich, was held in abhorrence; it was offered, but offered in the same manner that the admirers of Socrates might have proffered the poison to him.

From Walton he gleaned nothing, saving that he had always managed his own affairs ever since he heard that Mr. Verity attended the Epsom Races; and that as for Mr. Honor, to his certain knowledge he had been often to the theatres, and *therefore* was not a man in whom he would put any trust.

It is said that ruin always makes a man a Radical, and that the disappointed are always Reformers; but what had converted Walton was to Douglass quite a puzzle. He had never *assisted a friend*, and therefore could not have been neglected; he had never tried any speculation, to his knowledge, excepting that of marriage in the way of a time bargain, and therefore had never lost,—and that speculation he made with his eyes open, and with greedy hands ready to grasp the treasure: but he had become evidently a convert to the new light, and considered tea and tracts as much more conducive to the healthy state of both body and soul than rich dinners and generous wines.

Douglass was glad to escape from the tête-à-tête after the frugal repast; and he hastened to converse with Amelia, who had become more attached to him from his being the only person she had seen who was not of that straight-haired order. Her lively remarks were frequently checked by her guardian angel Mrs. Walton, who now considered it a breach of the Sabbath to laugh, and a profanation to wear a cheerful countenance: so true it is that women rush into extremes, and endeavour to make up in the sanctity of age what they lost in the levity of youth.

Poor Amelia was considered as a lost mortal: although endowed with a proper sense of religion, she could not alter nature, and fix upon the shoulders of eighteen the heavy noddle of seventy. To Douglass's offer of taking her to Paris she acceded instantly; and even Louisa did not withhold her consent: since her marriage with Walton, and her altered manner in regard to that seriousness, she had grown rather penurious, and had imbibed all the bad qualities of that over-righteous sect which holds the innocent meeting of people at dances as dangerous to salvation, and regards a dinner-party as a challenge to the Devil.

Douglass considered the hasty assent to his offer as a proof that Amelia was tolerated rather than beloved, and that her sister did not relish the increase of the weekly bills occasioned by the little additional expense they found it requisite to incur in order that they might still have the reputation of being not only liberal, but fashionable. It is very strange, but it is true, that no people who outwardly pretend to carnal mortification have so much inherent pride as the righteous over much. Poor souls! whilst they see their neighbours rejoicing in the vortex of perdition, they groan over the miseries which they are entailing upon themselves: but only entice one of the righteous with the same lure, and all the milliners are bothered for a month to bedizen the body of the saint. Sackcloth and ashes are very proper things of which to read; but who ever heard of one of our modern female saints who adopted the costume? The fact is, that whenever you see a woman overdressed,—which means, almost entirely undressed,—you will find she is either a desperate saint, or a despairing sinner. Mediocrity is best, especially in women.

The next day Douglass busily employed himself arranging his affairs. He sold out a considerable sum of money to meet the debts he had contracted, and to pay the sums he had lost; he wrote a most affectionate letter to his wife, and he finished it with a prayer for the safety of Houghton.

The title-deeds he removed to his banker's; and he gave a fresh power of attorney to a solicitor of the name of Crimp, who, he was given to understand, would be a most useful friend in any emergency. Douglass gave him to understand that he was the possessor of Longdale, and desired him at his first convenience to go down there with a surveyor, and to make an estimate of the property: not that he had any intention of selling it at that moment, but that he wished to ascertain its real value.

Douglass then ran down to his mother-in-law's cottage, and

found her no longer Mrs. Anson, but Mrs. Marshall. The worthy rector had taken the widow to wife, and he found that his room was better than his company—for they had only committed the rashness the preceding day, and were so happy in each other's society that they evidently did not want his. He therefore proffered a thousand congratulations, hastily ran over the account of Julia's and Houghton's health, the reason of his visit to England, the death of Verity, and his determination to take over Amelia as a companion for Julia, and likewise to save her from becoming at her tender age such a very serious character as her sister. He then looked at the church, cast his eyes upon his old cottage, jumped into his carriage, and, returned to town.

His principal business being concluded, and a great part of his principal being absorbed, he prepared to leave town for Paris, having previously written to Stanhope, and promised to take every care of his sister, and not to throw her in the way of falling in love with any of the forty thousand self-made marquises who infest the French capital.

Every preparation having been made, Amelia and himself left town and proceeded to Dover. They were, as the reader may have known, not overmuch acquainted; for previous to Douglass's arrival in England, he had never seen her. Stanhope had often spoken about her as a forward pretty girl, who had now matured into rather a wild but beautiful and animated creature. His first business therefore was to make himself so agreeable that she could regard him as a brother, and thus free her from those little rigid forms which mark the strangers from the well-acquainted; and accordingly he used all the fascination in his power, and was unremitting in those little nothings which hardly come within the scope of *attentions*, but which make more progress towards a young heart than half the fine speeches and fulsome compliments with which the self-sufficient lover attempts to force his way to the citadel.

Unused to the rapidity of travelling, Amelia became very excited, and laughed and talked in the most animated manner. Neither was Douglass much behind her in the lively remarks: he had caught the enthusiasm from her, and he soon grew from the first formality to the familiar and the easy.

Long before they had arrived at Rochester, he had called her his own sister. Douglass soon found Amelia a most agreeable companion: she was romantic in her notions, and had read almost every novel which had issued from the press for the last

three years. She was indebted to Mr. Walton's maid for this supply of intellectual food; for otherwise, no book of that demoralising order ever entered the house of her religious sister. Indeed, so far did she carry her scruples upon this point, that a Shakspeare was voted improper, and history itself hardly reckoned as worth reading. "Sherlock upon Death"—"Watts's Serious Call"—"Baxter's Shove"—"Crumbs of Comfort"—"Penitent Sinner"—"Is it well with You?" and fifty thousand tracts, all very religious, and all very proper, were to be found in every room of the house. On Sundays they had cold-meat dinner, in order that the cook might go to meeting; and no work or labour was done within the range of Mr. Walton's government.

To read a newspaper was inevitable destruction, and to play sacred music on the piano was more than doubtful. The consequence was, that idleness tended to vice: the servants, on the plea of going to meeting, went to the Park; and the straight-haired, pomatum-stinking footman doffed his livery, and assuming the frizzle head of a beau and the sprightliness of a sinner, escorted Mary Scullery in her evening rambles, and became so intimate with that methodistical young lady, that it was found quite necessary, although by no means convenient, to marry them.

Mrs. Walton once allowed her maid to remain without medical assistance because she thought it sinful to call in a physician of a Sunday; and Mr. Walton nearly died of epilepsy, because his wife thought it encouraging sin to buy ether on the Sabbath from the shop of the neighbouring apothecary. Amelia related these little anecdotes with a peculiar liveliness, and she said she felt like a bird released from its cage and allowed to flutter in freedom.

"And, Amelia," he began, "now that I have charge of your sweet self, I should like to know how that little heart of yours beats, or if it is the property of some lucky fellow who has captivated it."

"Indeed," she replied, "my heart is my own. One might have died at my sister's without seeing a human face but that of one Methodist parson, who did pay me great attention; but I discountenanced him. I could not bear his duplicity, and his sanctity left him whenever my sister left the room."

"Then I must look after you sharper, my pretty Amelia; for in Paris the French whisper love with more assurance than a Methodist parson in England; and you English girls always imagine the compliment sweeter because it is paid in a foreign

language: not unlike the sailor, who always thinks his prize-money greater when paid in Spanish dollars."

"But ladies do not measure love by the compliments; and sailors are none the richer in reality for the heavy coin they covet; so you are wrong, sir, in both your premises and conclusion."

"I see very well what will be the conclusion of your argument, pretty Amelia; but I am now your guardian and your protector, and you will not marry without my consent."

"Oh! certainly not," she replied; and then taking some work from her reticule, she stitched with great eagerness as she said, "Ah! I see I am never to be married, for you will never give your consent. I suppose I am to die an old maid, and drive asses,—and have a cat and a teapot."

"About the consent you are half right, for I never shall be able to part with you. The fact is, I begin to think I shall love you too much myself."

"There now, you sinner!" she replied; "you warned me against the French compliments, and you are telling me in plain English that you love me. Well, well, I'll be revenged if you do not give your consent; for I'll tell your pretty little wife what a flirt you are, Master Robert."

"Don't you do any such thing, Amelia; or you will make her jealous, and I shall lose you."

"Ah! then," she replied, "perhaps I may use a little *discretion*, and allow you to be happy."

"Very well, Amelia; and you shall have a husband when you are tired of me for a friend."

"Dear me!" she replied, "I always thought they were very different things;" and she worked away.

In this manner, and keeping up a light frivolous conversation, they jumbled through Canterbury, and by nine in the evening were snugly housed at Payne's hotel. The next morning they crossed to Boulogne, and proceeded to the Hotel de Londres. Douglass thought Amelia would go mad with the novelty of the scene: she could not resist the temptation to laugh, and she quizzed every man, woman, and child who passed. She herself attracted much attention; for there was a freshness about her person which is rarely equalled, and a grace in her walk which could never be surpassed. She overheard the many expressions of rapture as the strangers, talking purposely loud that she might overhear it, pronounced her a real Venus—an exquisite beauty.

Douglass soon perceived that Amelia's heart would not prove a strong citadel against the invasion of the female's tyrant; and he knew exactly in what manner a Frenchman makes his approaches, and how much he is indebted to his impudence for his ultimate success. She had one safeguard—and a great one it is on the Continent: *she had no money.* Those who have lived long in Paris are quite aware how little real attention an Englishwoman receives from this gallant nation providing she is *not* married, and has no allurements but her personal charms.

It is within memory that a certain gentleman passing himself as a prince, he having about as much right to the title as the Pope has to the Viceroyship of Ireland, had a sister, whom he introduced to a family, one of the daughters of which he pretended very seriously to admire: she had a fair fortune. Some one, however, hinted to his highness that the younger sister would have the most, and his love was immediately suspended until the important news was ascertained. The little princess was the person chosen to sound the delicate ground; and one day, when alone with the younger sister, she did not make a regular approach, but she assaulted at once and boldly put the question, asking thus:—"Which will have the most money—you or your sister?" The young lady, then only fifteen, but clever enough, answered, "I will tell you truly if you will tell me with equal truth *why* you ask the question."—"Certainly," replied the princess: "it is for the information of my brother, who says, if *you* have most money, he will marry you."—"*Indeed*, Annette," replied the English girl, "he is too kind: tell him that my sister will have the most money, and will be the greatest fool of the two if she marries such a mercenary *prince!*" His highness was forbid the house, and thus another English girl was rescued from foreign claws.

Douglass hired a French rattletrap, and the next day proceeded to Abbeville, the day following to Beauvais, and the third evening they were in Paris. Douglass rushed into Julia's arm's,—he embraced his child now perfectly restored to health,—and he introduced his charge, having previously, when in England, written to say that she was to be his companion.

"Thank heaven you are returned at last, Robert! Oh! how long—how miserably long has the fourteen days appeared since you left me! I have counted the moments—I have watched the close of each day with rapture since the flight of time thus shortened our separation; but here you are, and all my sorrows forgotten. For you, Miss Stanhope, I have prepared a room; you

are welcome, and I shall be happier now I have a companion,—for that truant Robert is not worthy of the name."

Amelia seemed at once to cling to Julia as a friend; an intimacy was established in a moment, and they all sat down to dinner, rather tired, but excessively happy.

"Do you know, Robert," said Julia, "that I am about to give you some good advice, and that is, never to leave a young and pretty wife like myself in such a place as this without a protector. I have had visits from half the nobility—or rather, might have had, for they called incessantly, and I was ultimately obliged to place myself under the protection of your friend and old schoolfellow Walsingham. He has been unremitting in his kindness, and has been daily here to inquire when you were expected, and to offer his services to me."

Douglass knew the reason very well which had induced his friend to be so anxious about his arrival: he owed him some money, and his bills had become due; he felt for his respectability, and for his losses, no doubt. "Indeed," replied Douglass, "I am glad to hear it: when was he here last?"

"This morning; and he seemed really glad when I told him you would be in Paris to-day. He promised to call to-morrow, and refused my invitation for this evening on the plea of your being fatigued.—Such a nice man, Amelia! At first I disliked him; but his attention during Robert's absence overcame my prejudice. He is so clever and shrewd!—besides which, he is an old acquaintance of Robert's, and one of the only men we know; for, owing to Houghton's indisposition, we have lived quite retired. He will make a charming companion for you: he speaks French beautifully, and is, by his own description, quite a walking guide for Paris.—Now tell me, Robert, how is my mother, and all our friends and relations?"

Douglass briefly narrated, for he felt little inclined to talk, the marriage of her mother, the awful and serious change of Louisa, and the reports concerning Margaret.

"Oh," she continued, "I have received a letter from Margaret. She intends coming to Paris in three months' time: her husband will then have some few months leave, and she is desirous of seeing how we 'get along,' as the Americans say; for she declares, that never was there a husband so good as Charles Stanhope."

"He is a dear, kind, good, affectionate *brother* as ever lived," Amelia remarked, "and promises to be as good a husband, and would be as kind and as indulgent a parent."

"Well done, Amelia!" said Douglass; "Charles's trumpeter is not dead. I wish I had some one to blow mine for me half as well. Now, tell us about the Methodist parson."

"Not I, indeed," replied the sprightly girl; "he is too *serious* for me. He may be a very good man; but I wish he were less at my sister's, and more in his pulpit. He preaches remarkably well; but he is very indifferent, I am sure, in his practice. If I am to fall in love, I would rather fall in love with Mr. Walsingham, solely because he is the *friend* of Robert."

Douglass gave a deep sigh; he saw all the mischief which might fall upon them, and he felt that now Walsingham *would be* his companion even if he did not wish it. The first falsehood had paved the way for the rest, and it required his utmost effort of memory not to tell another whenever a question was asked him. So true it is, that one lie is the preface to another.

"I shall never give my consent, Amelia," he said, smiling. "You know the terms."

"Oh yes," she replied, whilst a light blush played for a minute on her cheeks, "I remember the agreement, and likewise your remark; but as I have a regard for myself and my happiness, as well as for your own, I shall not betray it. I'm very tired, and I'm off to bed. Good night!"

CHAPTER XIX.

Douglass's first endeavour when left alone with Julia was to discover, if possible, how far the many conversations she had exchanged with Walsingham had been to his prejudice; for had he betrayed the secret of his gambling, the extent of his losses, his frequent attendance at the Salon, and his present debts, he knew that all his happiness was at an end; Julia would have discovered the frequent falsehoods, and consequently he never should have been credited even by his own wife. He soon perceived from the cross examination that Walsingham had told sufficient to excite curiosity without having satisfied it; at the same time that he had considerably gained in his wife's estimation. He had been so attentive during the child's illness, had called every day, had volunteered his services, and had confessed, when questioned, that he had seen Douglass at the Salon, but

that he believed a few pounds would cover his losses. Julia's whole occupation seemed to have been nursing Houghton and pumping Walsingham.

The first hour when alone was in talking over her mother's marriage, for she had received an account herself from the person most interested: then they canvassed the conduct of Louisa, then that of Stanhope, and lastly, as if afraid of coming to the point, and therefore avoiding it as long as possible, they touched upon Verity, his partner, the settlement deed, and other minor questions. Douglass was now deep in lying; he had broken the ice, and cared not how much more he added to the account.

"The deed," he replied, "was not finished when I left town; but instructions had been left with Honor to complete and send it over for signature. Longdale was in high perfection, and the monument to Houghton had been duly regarded." This little heap of falsehoods seemed greatly to restore Julia to the peace she had known before; he promised faithfully not to risk any further sum to recover the *little* he had lost, and they fell asleep, one dreaming of future felicity, and the other of the round table, green-covered lamp, croupiers, dice, fortune, and throwing in ten mains, or the colour running for fourteen times.

Breakfast was scarcely finished, and Amelia and Douglass in comfortable conversation, when the servant announced Mr. Walsingham; and before Douglass could give directions for showing him into another room, the thin gentleman came like a shadow of the thin servant, and shook hands with Douglass with great cordiality. On seeing Amelia, whom he had at first taken for Julia, his countenance became suddenly as pale as the dead, and he ejaculated "Miss Stanhope!" with the most evident surprise. Douglass introduced him immediately; but his bow was that of timidity—his whole manner was more like a frightened boy than a man of the world, and it was some time before he recovered himself: but Douglass thought he saw a gleam of inexpressible joy come over his countenance when addressing Miss Stanhope; he said "*Amelia*, will you leave Mr. Walsingham with me for a moment?" He arose and said, "I trust, Miss Stanhope, it will only be for a moment;" whilst Amelia, blushing, left the room.

"I am most thankful that you are returned," began Walsingham; "I have had a world of trouble to pacify your creditors: they have been clamorous, and have united together against you; it was with great difficulty I could get them from sending a huissier to seize your carriage and other things belonging to you. Your old man, as I call him, spread the report that you had

taken refuge in Italy, and that you were separated from your wife. My contradiction, and my daily report that your wife was in Paris, had heard from you, and expected your return, pacified them. I find they hold your acceptances for 8000*l*., and I hope you are come prepared to pay them directly: indeed some of them are in the street now, and the sooner you satisfy them the better."

"That I am prepared to do directly," replied Douglass; "the money is all at Lafitte's, and more than is requisite: but first let me pay you the trifle you lent me;" and he placed in his hand two bills of a thousand francs each.

"Oh! this little trifle," replied Walsingham, "does not signify in the least; and if it is of any service to you, my dear sir, let me entreat you to keep it."

Douglass thanked him for his kindness, and proposed instantly going and arranging the accounts; to which Walsingham assented; and before noon that day, Douglass had paid the above amount, and was released from all importunities, and his credit as high as ever.

Walsingham now proposed to pay Mrs. Douglass a congratulatory visit; and he began by skirmishing before he ventured to say that Amelia was a very fine girl, and that he never remembered being so overcome at first sight by any person in his life. He thus enticed Douglass to speak of her; and he fancied that Walsingham had elicited all he required to know,—namely, her connexions and her prospects. Douglass thought he felt an odd convulsive motion of his arm when he referred to Mr. Walton, in whose house, he mentioned, Amelia had resided. He then adverted to the marriage of Charles, and that he was likely to come over for a few months in the spring. When Walsingham heard this, he asked if Mrs. Walton was likely to join the party. When Douglass answered, "Certainly not," she would not put her foot again in this sink of iniquity, he felt another convulsive squeeze, and he thought his friend increased his pace towards the door.

In the mean time, Amelia had, with all the light feeling of her age, bounded into Julia's room, and commenced a conversation with her relative to the first impression of Walsingham when he was introduced to her, and the sudden and unexpected ejaculation of her name. "I am sure, my dear Julia, you must have told him that I was expected, for he knew me immediately."

"Upon my word, my dear Amelia, I never did mention your name to him; neither did I ever say that you were expected:

but you seem as if he had made some impression upon you already. Now don't fall in love, for we know very little about his prospects or his property—and great love and little money never go well together."

"Oh! love indeed!—why, Julia, you are as bad as your husband! Every one fancies, because a person comes to Paris, she must necessarily fall in love; as if Cupid was in the air, and finding it too light to support his weight, came walking into the houses. He certainly did appear very much surprised at seeing me, and, for the first acquaintance, I have no hesitation in saying that I like his appearance."

"Perhaps he is timid before strangers," continued Julia; "and I suppose he learnt your name from some of the servants, as I take it for granted he did not see 'Stanhope' written in your countenance, pretty as it may be;—and that, my dear Amelia, no one is more ready to allow than myself."

"You are a dear good creature, Julia: but really I only asked you because he appeared confused; and I expected rather to find a bold than a timid admirer, from all I have heard of the Parisians. I wonder if Robert will ask him to dinner; not that I care about it, but I should like to see him again."

"Depend upon it you will see enough of him; for I flatter myself he is rather struck with my beauty,—and so do not imagine that you are to make all the conquest.—Oh! here is Houghton, looking rosy and lovely."

"Nurse!—nurse!" said Amelia, springing towards her,—let me have him! There, Julia, see how fond he is of me! he does not cry a bit, pretty little chubby darling!" and she kissed him over and over again. "How I like children! There you go! up, up, up!" she continued as she threw the child in the air. "Dear little cherub, what a comfort you must be to your parents!"

"I begin to doubt that," replied Julia, "for I am sure I felt more anguish when the child was sick than I ever felt pleasure when it was well; for I thought how wretchedly miserable I should be if it were taken from me. Oh! how long did I remain, my eyes fixed upon the child! I could not sleep—I knew no comfort—I dreaded every change. But now that I see it well and likely to continue so, although thankful to God for his great goodness, yet I do not know an equal pleasure to the extreme pain I suffered. We were all alone; Robert was in London, and I had only the child and the doctor to comfort me."

"Never mind, Julia; I shall be nurse to the child, and save

your arms. Since Louisa has had a family, I think she is much happier."

"Much happier!" interrupted Julia; "why, are they not as happy as the day is long? I heard from Robert that they lived like turtle-doves, and scarcely ever were separated for a moment. Is he mistaken?

"A little," replied Amelia. "For about a year after their marriage they went on uncommonly well." ("Hush! Houghton, hush!" she said, as she rocked the child in her arms.) "But no sooner did they get acquainted with a Mr. Cantall, than a visible change took place. Cantall was a good-looking man, and would have been better-looking had he not stuck his hair in straight lines over his head. He possessed a musical voice, and was apparently so good, so righteous, that Louisa was always glad when he called. By degrees he became almost an inmate in the house. A more than usual sanctity soon was visible; and his brotherly love increased at a wonderful pace. About this time I came to the house on a visit to my sister; and I soon found that I was destined to be annoyed by his continual endeavours to convert me. He spoke of sisterly affection: as he read some tracts, with which he always crammed his pockets, and I often detected his eyes roving towards me; and whenever any passage was particularly tender, that passage was invariably directed to me. Walton had caught the enthusiastic ravings of this wretched creature, and began, from being open and unreserved, to become suspicious and scrupulous. He changed his lawyer because he went to the races, and placed his affairs in the hands of another, who absconded with some of his money about a fortnight afterwards. This made him morose, and soured his temper. His suspicions next fell upon Cantall, who was now almost domiciled in the house: hence a little difference began with Louisa, which their austerity, so far from removing, has seriously increased. I, however, have been the cause of ejecting him from the house; for one day, when I was endeavouring to please him by reading one of his tracts, he approached nearer and nearer my chair, until I felt his arm encircle my waist, and before I could escape he kissed me. I flew out of the room to Mr. Walton, who, glad enough to get any opportunity of being rid of this hypocrite, desired him to take up his bed and walk, and never more to enter his abode. The vile fellow, looking at me, and saying with the most demure look, 'Peace be with you and in this house!' walked off—and I hope, for ever."

"And Louisa," interrupted Julia, "what did she say to this?"

"She felt it much, because she always thought him so good a man, and one who was, as he represented himself, a labourer in the vineyard: she declared that all his ways 'were ways of righteousness, and all his paths were peace;' but one thing is quite certain,—namely, that Walton is not so gay or so happy as he was, and that Louisa has become downcast and sad. I dare say, if Robert had not taken compassion on me, my hair would never have curled again!"

"You are a funny girl, Amelia! But I see Houghton has fallen asleep, and you have proved yourself a good nurse, so place the baby in the cradle, and let us see if Robert has returned home. But don't you fancy that Mr. Walsingham will admire you:—no, no; I am to make new conquests, although I am a wife and mother."

The very marked manner which was manifested when the ladies entered the room where Robert and Walsingham were seated, must have convinced Julia that Walsingham was much taken with the fine features of Amelia. She was of moderate stature; her hair raven black—a most determined jet; her eyebrows arched a little, and joined; her eyes, shaded by the long lashes, were dark and clear; whilst the upper lip had a peculiar tendency to pout, as if the tender part grew more than usual over the skin of the face: her features were beautifully regular, and she wore her hair in the Grecian style. To Douglass's eyes her figure was perfect; but Julia, when she became jealous, discovered that her shoulders were too high, her feet too large, her waist too small, and her fingers too long.

The conversation began in that usual manner so peculiar to English people: we are more indebted to a snuff-box and the clouds for a commencement than any other nation in existence. This prelude having been duly played without any variations, Amelia commenced by saying that she hoped we were not condemned to be moped in this gilded prison, either by day or by night; that she had heard of the gay doings of this metropolis. "And, Mr. Walsingham," she added, "I shall enlist you in our service, and expect you will be a true and faithful knight."

"You may depend upon my utmost exertions, Miss Stanhope," he replied: "it would be quite a sufficient inducement to be allowed a participation in your society; and I verily believe that had I been Adam in Paradise with you, I should have tasted the forbidden fruit if you had offered it."

"Bravo, Mr. Walsingham!" said the lively girl. "You seem to have lived long enough in Paris to have caught the manners and customs of the nation."

"Long enough at any rate," replied Walsingham, "to have learned to admire beauty, youth, and sprightliness, when they are concentrated in one fair female."

"There, Julia!" replied Amelia, "that must have been meant for you; for I never could get a compliment paid me, excepting by some old married man like Robert, or some *serious* gentleman like Cantall."

"You are in the same position as heretofore," said Walsingham, "for I never pay a compliment."

"And I am quite certain she never deserves one," replied Julia.—"But a truce to this. I for one certainly feel inclined to see all that Paris can show; and I propose, since good fortune has made us acquainted with Mr. Walsingham, that he enacts master of the ceremonies. The change will benefit me; and now, thank Heaven! as we are all well in spirits and health, I am resolved to play the truant a little myself."

"Well, Walsingham," Douglass said, "we are under your orders, and to you I confide the ladies,—that is, as far as sight-seeing goes; but after your flattering speeches, I must enact guardian."

"Oh, thank you, Robert!" replied Amelia; "I am to be under your surveillance, am I? then see what a pretty dance I will lead you! But come, Julia, let us put on our bonnets:" and very shortly afterwards both the ladies returned.

In their absence, however, Douglass confided his intentions to Walsingham. "Walsingham," he began, "I fear this lively little romp will be a great bar to my recovering my losses; for it will be impossible to get out without detection, and I cannot leave them alone of an evening."

"Really," replied Walsingham, "I have thought much of your situation, and am now of opinion that the first loss is the least. Perhaps, if you followed up your system, you might ultimately succeed; but I think that you, as a married man with a family, would act more prudently by abstaining from the Salon. But if you are determined to persevere—which I most strenuously oppose—it is as easily done before dinner as afterwards: any time after three o'clock Frascati's is open, and by that hour we can always have managed to have fatigued the ladies.—But mind, I recommend your not playing at all."

"Why, it was but the other day you spoke of the timid men as the only losers, and prompted me to play continually—nay, desperately; and now you change like the wind, and are dead against it!"

"I did not know so much of your family then as I do now.

Your wife evidently suspects you of a great desire to play ; she mentioned to me the manner in which you became possessed of your fortune, and numerous sayings of brown fortune-tellers, by which you are destined to lose it. Now it is obvious you have enough to be happy and comfortable, and you will only ruin your domestic felicity and your own individual peace of mind by following up the blow."

"It is no use—I must play," replied Douglass. "I want the excitement; every thing appears dull without it: and I swear I would rather play, if I played to a certain loss, than not play at all!"

"Oh my good friend! if it is the excitement of play you require, I can always sacrifice a little time to a game or two of écarté, in which the ladies may join. We can play as high as you like ; and I should always understand you, if in touching one ring on your finger you intended to bet ten Napoleons, in touching the second fifty, the third one hundred; and my scratching my ear would be the answer that I took the bet; whereas my omitting to do that, would be an answer in the negative. When you were in, the plan would answer just as well. The game is more amusing, as one has the satisfaction of dealing the cards and playing them ; whereas at rouge-et-noir you only see the fun, and mostly experience the mortification of seeing your money swept away without remorse."

"I do not altogether," replied Douglass, "dislike this proposition. To be sure, there is one drawback: I do not know the game ; and I am quite certain that neither of the ladies are more informed than myself."

"I can teach you," replied Walsingham, "in a moment: it is the easiest game ever played, and after dinner this evening I will soon make you understand it thoroughly."

They now sallied out ; the ladies walking together ; Walsingham supporting Amelia on the right, and Douglass taking the side nearest Julia. Their first visit was to the Louvre ; and in passing, as they did, by the Rue Castiglione, through the Tuilleries, Douglass felt rather astonished at the number of people, and some of them of the most questionable appearance, who bowed to Walsingham. To those many questions of Amelia as to who they were, she received for answer, that they were noblemen ruined by extravagance, and almost dependant upon public charity. This ragamuffin was the Marquis de Châteauville ; another thin squalid apology for a man, was the Vicomte de St. Léon ; and a third, infinitely more like a spy of the police than a nobleman, was M. le Duc d'Orangeville. "Changes of

government," he added, "are no friends to prosperity; and when the political pot boils, the scum swims. During Napoleon's time, these were great men; now, under Charles, they are nothing. These poor fellows," he added, "are upon my pauper list, and I almost ruin myself by my charity: but *now*, Miss Stanhope," he continued, "I think it quite right to begin with charity at home, and take care of myself."

They entered the Louvre, and for some time kept together, but alternately separated; for whilst Julia and Douglass were gazing with rapture on the beautiful picture of the Decapitation of Lady Jane Grey, Amelia and Walsingham had walked up the long gallery, and were poring over the Death of Endymion. Walsingham had offered his arm; and the splendid appearance of Amelia—for she really was beautiful and lively—attracted considerable attention.

Walsingham seemed well acquainted with the pictures and their various masters; he carried with him a catalogue to which he rarely referred, and was never deficient in an answer when Amelia suggested a question. It was very evident that he had been much smitten with her; and the strange confusion at the first interview quite convinced Douglass that he should have to use all his guardianship to prevent a too hasty ebullition of feeling.

"One might linger here for ever," said Amelia as they joined the other party, "and never be satisfied: and Mr. Walsingham is so kind, so clever,—he knows all the painters of the different pictures, and has been enchanting me with his vivid descriptions."

"It certainly is the most delightful gallery I ever saw," continued Julia; "and I intend to make this my daily resort.—But we appear to be nearly the only persons left."

"They close it at a certain hour," replied Walsingham; "and that sad hour is arrived, I fear, for these guardians of the treasures seem clearing the gallery. It is but another pleasure deferred," he continued as he looked with tenderness on Amelia. "But we must vary the scene, and visit the different lions, returning occasionally to this; for wheresoever we may go, this, after all, is the most agreeable sight and lounge in Paris.—By-the-by, I have discovered a great likeness in one of the portraits to Miss Stanhope: it is in the picture further down, of Venus playing with Cupid."

"Oh, nonsense," replied Douglass; "you will make the girl as vain as a peacock."

"I would rather see her," he replied, "like the birds of Venus, than the gaudy companion of Juno."

"I shall clip your wings, Amelia," said Douglass, "be you dove or peacock, or this flatterer will turn your brain."

"If you attempt to interfere with my compliments," replied Amelia, "I shall turn my back upon you."

They returned to the hotel to dinner. Walsingham was of the party, for Douglass felt himself under some obligations to him for having interfered in his behalf during his absence. Julia admired him the more he became her companion; and Amelia was certainly rather taken with his appearance and manner. The dinner was ended—the wine removed—when Walsingham thus introduced a subject which ultimately shook the pretty Julia's confidence in her most devoted husband.

"As you left the occupation of your leisure time to me," he began, "I have procured tickets for a masquerade ball."

"Oh, how delightful!" interrupted Amelia.

"It is to take place this day fortnight, at the Cercle des Etrangers; and I need hardly say that every lady must be masked, although it is optional with us to be so or not. At this masquerade will be the élite of Paris. There will be dancing, perhaps, by the artistes of the opera; and at two o'clock there will be a grand supper. I think both the ladies will be satisfied with this my first project; and if not inclined to go, the tickets are easily returned."

"Is it a public masquerade?" asked Julia.

"Certainly not," replied Walsingham; "and great interest is required to procure admission."

"Oh, Julia, we will go! Come, there is a dear creature! say yes, and thank Mr. Walsingham for his kindness and attention."

"That I am ready to do, and to express the obligation under which he has laid us. I shall certainly not object to this, more especially as I see Amelia has set her heart upon seeing this novelty, to her."

"I think," added Douglass, "there can be no objection, excepting in the eyes of Amelia's lover, Mr. Cantall. My pretty Venus, cannot you despatch one of your doves to London, and tell your romantic admirer of this masquerade, at which he might meet you. Come, don't pout like a pigeon! it would be a feather in any woman's cap to catch Cantall."

"Now, Robert," said the gay girl, "I will ask your consent when you least expect it; and let me tell you, that, like the old fable, you have shot at a pigeon and killed a crow."

"—The crow being Cantall, I hope," said Walsingham.

"Why, he is as black as one," replied Douglass;—"at least, so Amelia says."

"I wish I had a piano here," interrupted Amelia, "if merely to drown your tell-tale voice, you miserable babbler!"

"Let us play at cards," said Douglass; "and that will show, my pretty *Venus*, that you have no *dealings* with the Methodists."

"And I will volunteer to teach you écarté," said Walsingham: "it is a game every one must know in Paris, for you are obliged frequently to play, and this is the fashionable amusement. Do you know it?" he continued, addressing Douglass.

He replied in the negative, but ringing the bell, ordered the cards.

It was agreed that Walsingham should give the lesson to Amelia; and Douglass soon found he was to pay for it. The playing of five cards seemed so obviously simple, that even Julia, who had never played a card in her life, soon took the chair and won a game of Walsingham; the latter declaring it a game adapted to the meanest capacity, at which the novice was nearly on a par with the experienced. Douglass watched it narrowly, and believing him, soon opposed him, and met with a serious opposition.

Time, and paying for experience, has since taught him that there is no game on the cards more difficult to play than écarté. There are about a hundred intricacies in the game; and, simple as it appears, no game requires more study. Those who have seen the celebrated German Jew transferring the wealth of others to his own pockets by the dexterous management of these five pieces of painted pasteboard, giving one game out of five, and invariably winning, are aware that some excellence is requisite to secure success: and those who have seen the king turned up as if by magic, when one party happen to be four, have, until they found out that Fortune had nothing to do with it, uttered maledictions on the fickle goddess, and believed themselves unfortunate men. In another place may be detailed the numerous ways by which the unwary are pillaged; at present let it suffice to say, that Douglass played long with Walsingham that evening, and, owing to the ring system they had agreed upon before, he found himself very *unfortunate* indeed, and a loser of five hundred pounds.

END OF VOLUME I.

WALSINGHAM,

THE GAMESTER.

CHAPTER I.

We left Stanhope and his handsome wife comfortably settled in country quarters;—Stanhope, warm, affectionate, and fond; his wife, cool, calculating, and indifferent. She had every one of the sex's inherent failings which the genius of Hindostan pronounces as belonging to woman; and she had no redeeming qualities save those of virtue and equality of temper. For the first she was indebted to her icicle composition; for the latter, to the goodness of Stanhope, who never allowed it to be ruffled for a second.

They had passed their lives in the good old automaton fashion of soldiers quartered in a country village. They rose at stated times; ate at stated times; walked at stated times; slept at stated times; and so passed life, without any excitement to vary it. The new novels were a year old; and the papers and magazines arrived when they had outlived their circulation and their novelty. It is no wonder, then, that the arrival of a letter from Paris gave a new turn to their ideas. That letter was from Julia, and fixed in Stanhope's mind the resolution of passing some time in Paris when his leave should commence, and which would be about a month after the masquerade ball mentioned in the last chapter. Even the idea of seeing strange places failed to excite Margaret.

"Well, Margaret," said Stanhope, after reading the letter, "I am resolved to give you a run to Paris: you will see your old sweetheart Robert, and compare happiness with Julia."

"It is a consummate annoyance moving at all, Charles, when we are so quiet and so comfortable here."

"But the change, Margaret, will do you a world of good: besides which, the life we lead is so dull, and so monotonous, that we shall scarcely know how to behave ourselves when we get into society. We are at least a year behind our friends the Waltons, for we have not seen a political caricature or even read of the last fashion: and has the novelty (I thought that always was uppermost in a female's mind) no charms for you?—is it possible that you can be contented in such a hole as this?"

"Before this morning and the receipt of Julia's letter, Charles, you were always preaching the necessity of contentment, until you made me feel happy where I am. Now you tell me I am to seek excitement in novelty. I am quite contented here; and the very idea of packing up to go such a distance at such a season of the year would kill me with apprehension. As to seeing Julia and Robert, there can be no *necessity* for that: Julia says she is well, and Robert, we know, was in London the other day. I am quite satisfied with their account of themselves, and I would rather stay than go."

"Well, well, we will talk of that another time; but really the sameness of life we lead destroys me. Our utmost intelligence consists in some scandal, as disgusting as it is false. The only congregation of people we get is in the church and the churchyard; the only virtues we see recorded are engraven on the tomb-stones; and the public is concentrated in the town-crier. His villanous bell is the only music of the village; and headquarters are so far off, that we never see a uniform excepting on the parish beadle. By heavens! we are never lucky enough to see Punch or the children on stilts; and as for society, we cannot even get a hint from that of 'Useful Knowledge,' or the 'Suppression of Vice.'"

"I am sure," drawled out Margaret, "I don't want to hear from either one or the other."

"Well, Margaret, I wish I had your placidity of temper, and your easiness in being pleased; there must be some hidden virtue in the hemming of a handkerchief, which is unknown to man: you seem to be happy without ambition, and contented without either a change of books or situation. Now, although I am independent of any one of my amusements, and since I can pore over a book for hours, I may say I am contented; yet I think the contentment would be enhanced by an occasional change of scenery: they say fowls become blind on board a

ship from the eternal sameness, and I should not wonder if my visual organs showed me nothing but yonder green gate, that old oak, and the town-crier.—Oh, here comes that old bore Simpson!—pray what is he always whispering to you?"

"Oh, some nonsense about love, and his admiration about my beauty," said Margaret.

"The devil he is!" replied Stanhope with some surprise; "and I suppose he occasionally kisses your hand?"

"Sometimes he does," replied the Snowdrop; "and once he put his hand round my waist and——"

"Kissed your lips," interrupted Stanhope, his eyes lighting up with jealousy and suspicion.

"Yes," continued Margaret, "but I pushed him away, and told him I did not like it, and he has not done it again—only twice: I cannot find out the pleasure of kissing and kissing."

"Tell Mr. Simpson we are not at home, John; and take care you never let him in here again, or you will lose your place. Mind what I say, John,—I don't want his society."

"That is strange!" replied Margaret. "You just now said you wanted more society; and now you are lessening the number by the only agreeable person in the whole village—the only person who comes and sits by me, who tells me the news, and who is so kind and so attentive, and who—"

"Kisses your hand, and then encircles your waist, and then kisses you lips, and then—"

"What then?" said Margaret, more excited than she had ever been before.

"*Then* you wonder," continued Stanhope, "that I beg he will make his visits less frequent, or forego them altogether. Pretty Margaret, I am the only person who ought to be so favoured, and I cannot bear that any others should venture thus far upon my preserves. He is a poacher, and wants to make game of you; but he shall find that it is rather dangerous shooting without a license. Come, child, do drop that poor old patchwork chair; get on your habit, and we will ride for an hour or two."

"Very well, Charles, my dear; but I cannot see the amusement of riding up and down a parcel of lanes."

"Very true, my love. In summer, and in hot weather, a ride up narrow lanes with a tight hat, an impatient horse, a few insects in your eyes, and an unexpected turnpike to pay of the toll of one penny, leaving you, like a Santa Martha musician, to rattle your coppers as you ride, and carry a weight which would lose a jockey a race;—that is not either pleasant or

agreeable. But it happens to be winter. Come, come, the cold air will do you good: you want exciting—you want change of scene."

The horses were brought; Margaret was placed on her saddle. Her beautiful figure would have arrested the eyes of any London admirer, for she was beyond all criticism; and had her heart been capable of warmth, she would have been a prize rarely the lot of mortals. But she was as insensible to passion as is a statue, and now had become indolent from long inactivity. Even Stanhope had collected a little rust on the wheels of life; but whenever he was on horseback, his usual sprightliness returned, his buoyant spirits effervesced, and he was more like a schoolboy than a married man *without* a family.

"Now then, Margaret, my child, come, away we go!" and starting off his own horse, Margaret's followed at a brisk pace, whilst Charles, very unlike the attentive lover, led the way, hollowing and shouting like a madman.

The flush on her cheek, from the exercise and the cold, made Margaret's beautiful features still more beautiful; and when Stanhope reined in his horse, he could not help bursting into admiration at the sight. "Margaret," he said, "I have enticed you into this ride in order to enable you to do a good and charitable action; and the benefits the rich bestow are always more valued when the hand of beauty dispenses the charity. Here is what I wish you to give to poor old Jenkins, whose cottage was burnt the other night, and whose poor child suffered so much from the fire and the bruises, that its poor little life is in danger. I know you rejoice at this opportunity of distributing a little of what we have to those who are in distress; and you require not the argument which many use, whereby they seem more inclined to cover a multitude of sins, than to think of the real blessing they thus bestow. You must say something kind to the old man, and ask to see his child."

"Really it is very cold, Charles," replied Margaret: "can't we send the money?"

"You might send the money, certainly," replied Charles, rather quickly; "but then the object would be defeated—nothing tends more to alleviate distress than to see the eye of beauty moistening at the sad recital. No, no; we are not more than three miles distant; and the very circumstance of your riding so far in such cold weather, will doubly enhance the value of the gift.—Come—forward."

Both horses pattered along the lanes. The rosy flush of

health was in their cheeks; the animation of an intelligent mind sparkled in the quick eye of Stanhope, and as he cantered by the side of his beautiful wife, he occasionally prepared her for the scene.

"You must expect to see a sad sight," he resumed. "Poor old Jenkins has lost his all, and his wife is old and unable to work: a heartless villain has availed himself of the old man's poverty to entice his eldest daughter from him, nine months since; and this, added to his infirmities, the fire, his wife's sorrows, and his youngest child's indisposition, has bowed him to the dust. I fear you will have occasion to summon all your energy of mind; for a greater picture of distress one can scarcely imagine, and your heart is so good that you must poignantly feel for the miseries of your fellow-creatures."

No gentle squeeze of the hand thanked him for his kindness or his feeling, no eye sparkling with moisture confessed how much she felt even at the preparation for wo; but she merely said that "she wished she were back again, for the distance seemed great in such cold weather, and that really she could see no difference between giving or sending the money."

"It will teach us to be contented with our lot in life," continued Stanhope; "and you will see with what satisfaction you will remember this ride. Poor old fellow, after toiling up the hill as he has done, to find himself at the end of sixty years of struggling just where he began—in all probability worse, for he has still four children and a decrepit wife to provide for! See, Margaret, here is the place where the poor old fellow's cottage stood, and now not a vestige of it is left; and observe where the walk nicely trimmed with box still points out the way to that black patch on which formerly stood his home. Many and many's the time has the poor fellow run to welcome his children, as they came bounding along the path to meet him on his return from his daily labours, to receive his welcome kiss, to——"

"Dear, dear Charles, what a pretty bird that is sitting on that bush to the right!—do look!"

"It is a robin," replied Stanhope; and looking with a mixture of surprise and displeasure at his wife, he urged his horse on, and they shortly arrived at the door of the hut where the unfortunate man resided.

"Here my lad," said Charles, "hold these horses, and walk them gently about," addressing a lad of about fourteen years old; "and take care not to let them catch cold.—Come, Mar-

garet," and he assisted his wife to dismount; "now don't let your feelings overcome you, but nerve yourself up to see the wretchedness, to speak kindly, to appear to share their misfortunes."

They entered the hut. In an old chair, apparently too fragile to bear her weight, sat the old woman: she was spinning: but the vacancy of her eye soon betrayed that her misfortunes had pressed more heavily upon her than even Stanhope had imagined. Jenkins was seated near a small round deal table, on which was a Bible; and in a corner of the room were two children about the ages of ten and eleven, playing with a heap of shells, and prattling away quite unconscious of their misery. "Jenkins," said Stanhope,—(the old man stood upright and smoothed down his hair as he made a bow to his visiter,)—"I am come with my wife to inquire after you and your family, and to give you that assistance which I hope will make you a little more comfortable than at present." As he said this, Stanhope looked round the room, and certainly saw no articles of luxury by which he could have inferred that the family knew the blessings of comfort. The hut only contained one room; and in that one room the children and the parents were sheltered, fed, and slept.

Jenkins bowed again to Margaret, and shook his head, indicating that no human power could restore him to happiness.

"Come, cheer up, cheer up!" said Stanhope; "you must not allow the calamity to weigh you down; you must struggle, if only for your family's sake, and all your neighbours will cheerfully assist you."

"It's all of no use," said the poor old fellow; "it's here, sir," (putting his hand to his heart,)—"it's here, sir. I've no spirit to do any thing. And there's my poor old wife—she's happy now; though, thank God! she's lost all her remembrance like; and she sometimes sings and cries all at once. She does not know you are here, but she spins all day without noticing no one; and when I call her by her name, she looks for all the world like one of the people they call idiots. I've seen her laugh by the hour: and when she eats, it's not like a Christian; she snatches it all—ay, even from her children." Here poor old Jenkins turned away and wiped his eyes; then he continued: "But I thank you, sir, and you, pretty madam, for coming to see the old and the distressed; and God take you under his precious protection for it!"

Stanhope was deeply affected; but Margaret seemed more

careful to keep her habit from contamination, than in either listening to the old man, or heeding the old woman; although, now, from curiosity more than feeling, she went near the old dame and looked at her.

"Yes, sir," continued Jenkins; "I could have borne it all, had my son been back from the Indies, where he went as a sailor; or if," he said, lowering his voice to a whisper, as if fearing his wife might catch the sound, "that villain had not ruined my Susan. He took her from us when her help was most wanted, about eight months since; and now he has sent her back to us quite broken-hearted—so sick she can't move. And this it was that struck *her*" (pointing to his wife.) "It was an awful scene, and my old heart nearly burst when I forgave her. *She* lost her reason, like, ever since; and Susan was too overcome to live here, so we put her with Dame Wilkinson, where she lies sick and unable to move."

"My poor fellow," said Stanhope, "you must not dwell upon this sad story so much. Your Susan has returned to you a forgiven daughter, and you must now console and comfort her; she will soon recover her health, and then she will be anxious to repair the injury she has done you, and still be the prop of your old age."

"Thank you very kindly, sir, I'm sure I do, for all you say: but no, no, she never can be to me what she has been! Only think, sir, what you would suffer if some artful villain had seduced your sister—had left her to shame," (here Stanhope became dreadfully agitated,) "had ruined her for ever—had made her whole family wretched!—and then," continued the old man, raising his hands, "to leave her broken-hearted, broken with sickness, without a penny, in the County Hospital!—You tremble, sir, do sit down: why, you look all death like."

These words recalled the attention of Margaret, who had been busily employed in making a piece of paper, which had been substituted for a pane of glass, a kind of ventilator by loosening the corner. She saw her husband pale—nay, nearly fainting, gasping for breath; the real cause never occurred to her, for she had not paid the least attention to the scene around her, and she attributed it to the confined state of the hut. The door was thrown open, and some water in a cup soon restored him.

"It is nothing," Stanhope continued, "my dear; I am now quite myself again: the heat of the hut," (there was hardly fire enough to have warmed a chestnut,) "and my agitation. But

go on, Jenkins, and tell me all about it;—and cheer up, and take care of your old wife, for she seems very much overcome."

Here the old woman got up: she was nearly double with age: she hobbled to the window and looked out,—then turned towards her visiters, but she never noticed them; and as she went back to her chair to continue her avocation, she sang in a croaking voice, "'When black-eyed Susan came on board,—all in the Downs,—quick as lightning on the deck he stands;'" then joining the ends of the hemp, she continued spinning.

"It's an old song my boy used to sing," said Jenkins; "she remembers a word or two, but it's all wrong—I know it well;—but it's Susan she's a thinking upon. I'll tell you all about it, sir. It was about fourteen days ago, that Mr. Williams, our parish parson, came to us, just the same as you might do to-day, and he says, says he, 'Jenkins, I have known you these last forty years, and I never heard a word against your character; you have acted like a good man on every occasion, and now affliction has come upon you, the hand of friendship will be extended towards you: I have brought you some money I have collected from my neighbours, and this will help you to buy some furniture to put in your new hut.' You see, sir, I lost every thing by the fire,—I didn't so much as save a chair; and if dame's spinning-wheel had not been standing outside the cottage, it would have been lost too. 'Now sit down,' said the parson, 'for I want to speak to you about some other business.' Well, sir, I did as he desired, and he drew a chair close to me, and took my hand. 'Jenkins,' says he, 'is there any sin which you have committed for which you pray God to pardon you?' and he looked me full in the face.

"'Many, sir,' says I; 'for no man can say he has never done nothing wrong: and I hope God will forgive me, as I forgive those who have wronged me.'

"'That is,' continued the parson, 'spoken like a pious good man, and it will not be unrecorded in heaven. But you have another to forgive, Jenkins: you must,' said he, grasping my hand, 'you must see your daughter, and forgive her!' I shook my head. 'You must, Jenkins; as you hope for forgiveness of your own sins hereafter, so must you pardon hers. *He* has left her, *he* has deserted her already; and to whom can she apply, if her own parents disregard her prayer?'

"I shook and trembled just as you did just now, sir. I did not know what to say; I couldn't refuse, and yet I felt very bitter against her. I looked at him steadfastly, and I said, 'I can

do it; although I don't think dame can: she has cursed her for ever—she has put a mother's curse upon her, and Susan never can be happy whilst it is so.'

"'It was wrong, very wrong of her,' replied the parson: 'have you not read in that volume, "Judge not, lest ye be judged," and "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord?" Go, Jenkins, tell your wife I want to speak to her; and after I have spoken to her for five minutes, do you come in.'

"I called the dame, who was hobbling about after one of the children; and the parson soon convinced her she had done wrong, and settled that the next day we were both to go to the hospital, and see her, and forgive her. Well, sir, the morning came, and dame was afraid to go. She said that all the people would point at her as the mother of Susan, and that she knew she could not abide it: but I said we had promised the parson, and so on; and at last we set out. I thought I should have died when I saw the building; and dame staggered so, I could scarcely keep her on her legs. There was no one to say a word to us, but one woman, who led us to a small room, and then left us, saying that the parson would be there in a moment.

"Dame never spoke; but she sobbed bitterly: and whenever I began to comfort her, I somehow couldn't do it neither, —my heart was so full, and I felt so sick, and such a weight upon my breast, that I cried too; and there we were when the parson came in. He goes up to dame, and takes her hand, and tells her to dry her eyes and be a woman; that the act she was about to perform was a duty; that Susan was bitterly a penitent; and that there was more joy in heaven over one sinner who repented, than over ninety and nine just men who needed no repentance.

"'I wanted your daughter to come to you,' he said; 'but she is too weak, and so you must go to her.' Dame gets up, and I followed close behind; but he told me not to come upon the poor girl all at once. Well, we gets to the door, and we sees Susan sitting on the bed, a crying her eyes out, with her handkerchief afore them; and when dame sees this, she stopped and shook her head, and said she could not speak to Susan. I said, 'Go, go, dame, and comfort her poor soul!' And so she went, just step by step, until she touched her; and then she fell into her arms, and wept and wept; and I came directly, and we forgave her. She blessed us; and I—yes, I, her father, did bless her. And the parson, with the tears a running down

his cheeks, tried to bless us too; but his words were thick, and I couldn't make them well out." Here the old man stopped, and Stanhope added his tears. He turned away his head; and as he removed his handkerchief, he saw his wife, who had not paid the slightest attention, tickling the children with her horsewhip, and quite in raptures when they scratched without detecting her.

"Ah, well sir, I'm sure I thank you for those tears: it was a sight to see; and all dame's wrath went away directly she touched her own daughter. Susan fell back overcome like, and fainted straight away; and dame, she looked on just as she does now at your wife there. There was no life in her eye—it seemed as if she saw nothing at all; for when Susan was lifted to another bed where there was no pillow, to lay her quite flat and rub her forehead, dame remained looking at the empty bed; and when the parson goes to her, he finds her all wrong here, sir," pointing to his head: "she was a looking, and a singing, 'Susan! Susan! lovely dear!' "—And here the old woman, as if the words struck upon the nerve of memory, croaked, "Susan! Susan! lovely dear!" and then looked full in the faces of her husband and Stanhope, with an eye of vacancy shockingly appalling; then took up another tune—

"I jolly tar with the trousers on,—
I jolly tar, on board a man-of-war,
Would kiss a pretty girl with the trousers on!"

"Ah! there it is, sir, again! that's what my boy used to sing to the children to make them dance, and she has not forgot that. She came away with me from the hospital, sir, just as you see her now; and she never has done nothing since but sing and spin. She can't recollect her daughter; for the other day I took her over to the cottage, and she looked at Susan, and Susan cried to see she had made her mother an idiot like: and it was no use for her to take her hand and kiss it, and call 'Mother! mother!' dame did not heed it; and when looking her afflicted child full in the face, she sang, 'My vows shall ever true remain:' and Susan, who thought dame meant it for the curse like, fell back again; and I don't think she will be alive next Monday, and that day is her nineteenth birthday.—That's all of it, sir: and, God knows, it must be something more than a man to bear all that has happened, and what is to happen; for I somehow feel every now and then a kind of a tremble, which is

not like the old ague I used to have.—But, dear heart! what is dame about?"

The old woman had left her spinning, which she did quite mechanically; the hemp had been all spun, and she was in search of some more, when, in going to the corner where the two children were playing, and Margaret was contributing to amuse them, the dame, somewhat astonished at the odd figure of Margaret, took hold of her arm, and turned her face towards her. Stanhope, who saw it, said quickly, "Don't stir, my dear, or you'll frighten her. She will not hurt you; speak to her kindly."

The old woman, after looking some time, seemed endeavouring to remember the features, and for a moment there appeared a ray of intellect in her eye; and then wildly seizing Margaret by the arm, she said, "'Susan! Susan!—'" and then relapsing into her former aberration, continued singing—"'lovely dear! my vows shall ever—'" she broke off with, "'I jolly tar, on board a man-of-war,'" and went to a small shelf, from the top of which she took some more hemp, and returning to her wheel, continued her only avocation.

"Do, Charles," said Margaret, quite frightened at what had occurred, "do leave this: I am so alarmed! You must come, my dear; and you can ride over here again to-morrow: but I cannot bear her eyes—they look so dead."

Poor old Jenkins turned away to wipe another and another tear. Stanhope took his hand, and pointing to the Bible, which still stood open on the small round table, said, "You must seek, my poor old friend! for real consolation *there*. But you shall not want what little the world can give. I think I know of a cottage not far from this at a small rent, and which has a garden and more rooms.—But I will come over and see you again soon." As he said this, he shook him warmly by the hand; and leading Margaret to the door, who made a kind of timid bow, she was placed upon her horse, and the visiters were soon at a distance from that scene of wo and wretchedness.

For some time Stanhope could not speak; and when he did, it was merely an ejaculation, such as—"dreadful!" "horrid!" "misery!" until, passing the place where the old cottage stood, and in which Jenkins had passed his prime of years and manhood, he again stopped his horse, and commenced some observations on the uncertainty of the enjoyments of this life; when Margaret complained of the cold, and Charles increased his pace until he arrived at his own house. He assisted his wife from

her horse, and then seeing her pocket handkerchief in the pocket of her saddle, he drew it out, and with it the paper in which was the money he had destined for old Jenkins. He looked at her, for the noise as the money fell caused her to turn; his eye was a mixture of disappointment and reproach; but Margaret merely said, "Oh! I quite forgot it! another day will do as well:" and arranging the fall of her habit, she walked unconcernedly into the house.

Not so Stanhope; whose heart was mortified beyond expression to find that such a relation of facts could have taken place, and that his dear, his fondly-loved Margaret, could turn not only a deaf, but an indifferent ear to such a recital. He seized the money, jumped again upon his horse, and although the wind was high, the night advancing, the cold sleet falling, he started off at a gallop, and was soon again at the cottage door.

"I have come again, Jenkins, to repair an oversight. I was so bewildered by your narrative, that I forgot the chief object of my visit. Here, my good old man, take this; and I will soon place you in a better situation."

He looked round the solitary room: the old woman was still at her wheel, the children still occupied the corner, the Bible was open, and before Jenkins could thank him, the dame had again sung, "Susan! Susan! lovely dear!"

With a heart oppressed, he turned his horse's head towards home; and, not heeding the storm which now fell fast, he walked leisurely towards that house in which he had passed so many days: he stopped again to view the mark on which poor old Jenkins's cottage had stood, and in which he had passed his time, surrounded by his family, and respected by his friends.

In reviewing the painful scene he had that day witnessed, the mind of Stanhope naturally reverted to the cold indifference of his wife;—even he who loved as few have ever loved, whose whole heart was that of open, honest, and brave manhood—to whose eye the tear of pity would mount unbidden, who could not hear of the distresses of others without sighing to relieve them,—even his heart misgave him, when he saw in remembrance, whilst the tears were coursing down the cheeks of Jenkins and himself, the cold indifferent figure of Margaret as she played with the children, and *could* abstract herself from the scene around her. "She wants energy," he said to himself as he bowed his head down to keep the snow from his face, "she wants exciting; she has lived so long amongst these people that she has forgotten all but herself: and we must go to Paris,—

we must change our residence." And as he urged his horse to a quicker pace in order to gain his home before the night had thoroughly set in, he determined to solicit leave of absence for three months, and endeavour to warm the heart of his wife by the attractions of friendship. Julia and Margaret had never met since their marriage; and the sprightly Julia might animate the cold heart of the beautiful girl, and thus render Stanhope happier in the possession of a treasure on which he so much doated, but who that day had certainly not gained much in his estimation.

CHAPTER II.

WALSINGHAM now appeared in a different character. Formerly his equipage was humble, a kind of *cabriolet de remise* was his only vehicle: but now he drove to the hotel in a cabriolet of his own; his person bedizened with silks and chains, his dress neater; his servant a grown tiger with a gaudy livery, standing behind the vehicle, courting general observation,—thus, as he thought, enhancing the quality of his master. But it was a remark of Vidocq, who certainly had sufficient opportunities of knowing the materials of which his strange countrymen are compounded, that "whenever, *in Paris*, a man was seen with a gaudy cabriolet, with a servant standing behind it conspicuously dressed, *the master was a swindler*." And this remark was elicited from him when one of our countrymen was endeavouring to trace a worthless fellow who had passed himself off as the son of one of the most respectable people in France; and who, having introduced himself as such, had received the fortune of the lady he had promised to marry, had squandered or concealed the money, and then refused to fulfil his promise. It was to Vidocq that the Englishman applied; and that shrewd man, after asking several questions concerning the dress of the master and servant, the colour of the cabriolet, and this peculiar one—"Does he drive his servant inside, or does he stand behind?" and being answered that the servant invariably stood behind, replied, "*C'est un chevalier d'industrie.*"

This alteration in the dress was the consequence of his suc-

cess in teaching Douglass écarté; and the old saying, that one must always pay for his own experience, was here fully exemplified. If one lesson had sufficed, perhaps the loss would not have signified; but it was followed by another and another; and the new cabriolet, the frequent boxes at the various theatres—the whole altered man, was the result of continued ill fortune on one side, and of unparalleled success on the other. Robert was minus three thousand pounds, which had changed hands and was now quietly nursing for the future fortune of Walsingham; and as each accumulation to his store, in equal proportion rose the one and sank the other, so the one became a little less a favourite, and the other felt all the keenness of revenge, and all the wish of the foolish to endeavour, by persevering, to regain his losses. Douglass in this was artfully seconded by the very person who was picking his pocket; for occasionally he rose a winner, perhaps of fifty or a hundred pounds; but assuredly this was retaken with sufficient interest the evening following: and thus two evils grew more formidable—one, the constant companionship of Walsingham, and the growing attachment of Amelia; the other, the continual drain on the resources of Robert, who had long since abandoned the idea of living on his income, and, like all gamblers, was squandering his principal by wholesale. Affairs were in this state, one evening, when Robert and Walsingham were playing in the Salon, the ladies were together in Julia's room; and having dismissed the inquisitive attendant, Julia began:—

"Well, my pretty Amelia, I think before long we shall have to hurry your brother over here. It is needless for you to disguise your feelings for Mr. Walsingham; and without being much of a Solomon, I might say, that, under all the circumstances of the case, he must already have made you sensible of his attachment—perhaps *he has spoken?*"

"No, Julia, on my honour he has not. He certainly has gone so near the words, without requiring or pressing an answer, that I have latterly become more bold, and I do not feel the tremor I did feel the first time I was ever alone with him. Latterly he has become a little more distant, and has returned to the cold formality of 'Miss Stanhope;' whereas he did once or twice call me *his* Amelia."

"And, Amelia, do you really love him? Come, don't blush, there is no one here to betray you; between us surely there can be no secrets. I, although as young as yourself within a year, am your protector. You are here under my wing; and I

know you would not conceal from your Julia what friendship has made me ask."

"There can be no shame in the confession to you, Julia; and I frankly own I *did* love him—truly, sincerely!"

"That is right, my dear Amelia—*did* indeed! We are now informed of your feelings, and we must be careful you are not slighted; but tell me, has he ever spoken to you of his family or his connexions? because it has appeared to me rather odd that in all his communication with Robert, he never has once mentioned them."

"Yes," replied Amelia; "one day in the Louvre he spoke of his father as very infirm—that he was Sir William Walsingham; but that unfortunately they were not on the best of terms, arising from the wish of his father that he should marry some heiress whose estate adjoined his own; but that he, although he poignantly felt the breach between himself and his parent, (and he really was very much overcome when he spoke of it,) —yet that he never could offer his hand to her, more especially since he had seen me."

"Well, Amelia, that was as near an offer direct as ever I heard—what did you answer?"

"Nothing at all," replied Amelia; "and although he squeezed my hand gently, and I felt a slight tremor myself, yet we neither of us continued the subject. He seemed, poor fellow, quite distressed when he spoke of his father, and I was glad to spare him any further grief on my account. He remarked that I was unwilling to increase his pain, and finished by saying, "Well, one day the property must be mine—and that day is not far distant."

"Is he very amusing, Amelia, in his conversation? for latterly he has become very quiet, and he seems so earnest in every thing he does, that since they have played at écarté for five-franc pieces one hears not a word but 'propose.'"

"That is precisely what I do *not* hear," replied Amelia, laughing; "but latterly during the evening, since the detestable card-table has been the mutual object of both Robert and Adolphus, they seem whilst they shuffle the pack—to cut us."

"That is a dear pretty name, Amelia:—Adolphus Walsingham,—Sir Adolphus, I should say,—will sound well; and even your brother, fastidious as he is, will never object to a fine-looking baronet with a comfortable estate. But did he speak of his present fortune?"

"Yes," replied Amelia; "he seemed resolved to act most

honourably in making his approaches. He told me he was now a beggar, merely vegetating on two thousand a year; but, that he managed, by great caution and economy, to exist: that the fact was, he knew so many of the poor nobility, to whom it was really charity to give a dinner occasionally, that they quite drained his resources, and left him a Paris, instead of a parish, pauper."

"I remarked at the opera," continued Julia, "that he seemed well acquainted with all the performers; and his taste in music is undeniable. In all the really beautiful parts, I remarked, he awakened your attention; and he seemed evidently not only to enjoy, but to understand the music. It is true, almost all young men of fashion pretend to both; but you discover their ignorance as easily as the traveller discovered the monkey in man's clothes, who had forgotten to hide his tail."

"He does talk well, certainly," replied Amelia; "I never knew a man who riveted the attention more to the subject: and yet he is so light and trivial at times, that he contrives to keep a smile upon my countenance even when otherwise I should be thoughtful and reserved."

"You know, Amelia, that we women have the reputation of excessive curiosity; and therefore I know you will grant the favour I am about to ask. You know how young I was courted, asked, and married; and you know that Robert was the only person—the only man, I may say—who ever addressed a word of kindness to me. Now I have a curiosity beyond expression to know how another man converses when he is truly in love; and as I think that Walsingham most certainly does admire you excessively, I want you to grant me the request."

"And how," interrupted Amelia, "is this to be accomplished?"

"Nothing more easy," continued Julia. "We are exactly of a height; our voices are similar; and even were our figures so very different, the long robe of the domino would conceal it. On the night of the masquerade, we will be both dressed exactly alike; and you shall make Walsingham acquainted that you intend to wear a small white jessamine in your band. We will come into the room together, and enter the masquerade together: then Walsingham will select me, for I will wear the flower; and when I am satisfied with his soft nothings, I can transfer them to you, and he will never discover the cheat.

"I agree, my dear Julia, I agree. But suppose at that very time he should declare his affections for me?"

"Why, then, I will accept him, Amelia; and you will not be the first girl who has been proposed for *to* a mother, or accepted *by* a friend. Gratify me only in this: it is perhaps a foolish request; but somehow I have a kind of presentiment that something ludicrous will occur, and we will puzzle these lords of the creation by the cross questions and crooked answers which must necessarily follow."

"But, Julia, act the part well;—I imagine that he has deferred speaking until that night. You shall have him for an hour—which to me will appear an age: and mind you tremble properly, and feel very giddy, if he should propose. Do *act* well, and I dare say, with your experience, you will surpass the reality. So good night; for these gamblers for *sous* must be tired of that foolish game before now, and I may be surprised in this improper dress by your staid and sobered husband."

Very different was the scene in the saloon. There sat two determined gamesters: the retreat of the ladies had released them from the necessity of concealing their stakes, and they were now playing for two hundred pounds the best of five games. Hitherto the luck had rather favoured Walsingham; and Robert, who played neither coolly nor judiciously, vented his spleen at the eternal tide of ill-luck which seemed set against him now and always. Like all men who cannot command their tempers under the grievance of loss, he declared it useless to propose, for Walsingham always took in such brilliant cards; and if by any chance, when two tricks had been won by each, Walsingham happened to have the ten of the same suit of which Robert had the nine, he of course declared himself the most unfortunate man in the world. This irascibility of temper enabled Walsingham to play to a greater certainty; and, what with superior skill, what with a little sleight-of-hand, and what with the reckless manner of Robert, that evening closed at midnight, and about twelve hundred pounds went into Walsingham's pockets.

"You are indeed, my dear sir," said Walsingham, "more unfortunate than any man I ever opposed: I am generally a losing player, but with your cards the German Jew could not win. I really feel quite ashamed of receiving this large sum." Saying which, he folded the check upon Lafitte's house and placed it carefully in his pocket; whilst Douglass, eyeing him with a malicious vengeance, could not suppress his feelings.

"It is devilish odd, Walsingham, that whenever we play for small stakes you invariably *allow* me to win!"

"*Allow* you to win!" retorted Walsingham; "you may spare me that compliment, for I endeavour to win every game we play. I am not like a cringing aide-de-camp playing chess with his general, who fights him to a pawn, and then accidentally loses the game. Had you played as you played formerly at the Salon, with the luck you have had since your return, you would have been ruined without redemption."

"This eternal run," replied Douglass, "will soon effect my ruin. Since my first arrival in Paris, and that is only three months in all, I have lost upwards of thirty thousand pounds—very nearly half my fortune, for my estate does not yield me a farthing, or at least very little indeed, and the improvements have swallowed up the revenue.—But away with this sad retrospection!—it is needless. If I go on a tthis rate, I must find some method of living, and, I suppose, like all gamesters, become a swindler." A slight blush flew over the face of Walsingham; but it found the cheeks too cold and left them on the instant.

"However," continued Douglass, "I am resolved to have one great coup at the Salon the night of the masquerade. I must get a domino with two colours, black outside and scarlet within, which I can change as I like: I can easily conceal another mask under my dress: and thus I can elude the vigilance of my wife and that sharp-eyed Amelia. You must go unmasked, Walsingham."

"Not I indeed; I am rather too well known for that; I should be pestered out of my life. No; let us go exactly the same: I will have a scarlet-lined domino, and I will get four masks exactly the same:—in short, leave it to me. We can then if we feel disposed, have some amusement with the ladies, and can find out some of the secrets of the prison-house. I do think Miss Stanhope a most enchanting creature, and I anticipate some glorious fun on that night."

"I shall leave the fun to you, Walsingham, for *play* I must and will; and if I lose, I may then think of retiring for life."

No sooner had Walsingham taken his departure than a gleam of reason occurred to Robert. He saw himself gradually sinking; he saw that in avoiding public play he had fallen into worse company. The saying of the old gentleman at the dinner often came to his recollection—the hint which he threw out relative to the respectability of Walsingham—his unaccountable good fortune, and his almost certainty of turning the king if he dealt when his score was at four; yet had he watched him and watched

him narrowly. Then came the apprehension of Douglass that, should Walsingham be a wolf in disguise, he might have sacrificed Amelia: for he saw with pain that she no longer listened to him, but that she had been fascinated by the manner of Walsingham. This he resolved to fathom; and thus pondering over past events, and having before his eyes the more cheerful rainbow of hope, he retired to bed at one in the morning, agitated by his loss, burning for revenge, and nurturing a hatred for Walsingham.

The slight indisposition of his wife gave Robert an opportunity of an hour's quiet conversation with Amelia on the following morning. There she was, redolent of beauty, her dark eyes sparkling with animation, her spirits high, her manner enchanting; and in her society Douglass lost the dreary recollection of his continued misfortune, and once again became both gay and lively.

"Now, little darling," he said as he took the small hand of Amelia, "I am going to enact father to you, and I expect you will make a proper confession: so begin at once. I shall not be over hard in my punishments: twenty or thirty Ave Marias would only occupy your time for an hour."

"Indeed, Padre Robert," replied the gay girl, "when I confess, it will be to my lover."

"And am not I, Amelia, an *admirer*—perhaps a—"

Amelia put her small hand over his mouth, and said, "Don't confess to me what I should be obliged to punish with the greatest severity."

"And if I did," continued Douglass, "you could only inflict one punishment which would dishearten me; and that would be, forbidding me your company."

A strange tremor agitated the frame of Amelia, a sudden blush suffused her cheek, and in endeavouring to conceal her confusion she made it the more evident. Robert perceived it—at once he imagined that Amelia loved him; and although in that moment his reason might have strayed, yet he could not but be aware of the increased pulsation of his own blood. For a moment both were silent and both confused; but those who have accustomed themselves to study the human heart might have fancied they discerned in the distraction of both, that Douglass had betrayed the secret of his heart, and that the secret was not credited by Amelia.

"Amelia," he said as he pressed her hand, "look at me, my little angel." The brightness of her eye was dimmed by a falling tear, her face was flushed, her lips were apart, and her teeth

shone like the polished ivory. She did not speak; and in that silence was the worst of confessions—the most eloquent of acknowledgments.

"Amelia," he continued, "I have watched you narrowly lately; my mind has been employed in ascertaining if you really loved Walsingham. That you do love him I am convinced, and my object in this conversation is to elicit that fact."

"Love *him*," replied Amelia: "I could have loved him; but—"

"But what, my angel?"

"That I dare not—cannot tell you," she replied. "Nay, I think until the night before last I did esteem him, and even told Julia that I loved him sincerely; but—"

"Then," replied Douglass, "it is only something which occurred within a short period of time that has altered your affections."

"*Only*," replied Amelia; "but I fear that *only* may lead to your destruction. I almost doubt his being an honourable man. You start; but listen. Yesterday, when you and Julia went to the Rue Vivienne to buy those artificial flowers, and I was left alone at home, I, as usual, began to practise my singing, and was secure from intrusion, as the hour was earlier than he generally came. I was startled by a ring at the door-bell, and before I could remove myself into another room Mr. Walsingham was by my side. His first inquiries were for you; but I found out, as we prolonged our conversation, that he had seen you walking through the Place de la Bourse. He sat by my side, and after some trivial remarks about the masquerade tomorrow night, and his leaving the tickets, he began in that low sweet voice of his to talk of love. I cannot repeat all he said; but this he did,—he ridiculed marriage, and in glowing terms quoted poetry to cast a sneer upon love when shackled. I own I was much fascinated by the manner in which he repeated the lines, and I dare say I might have encouraged his continuation from my attention to him; but suddenly he knelt before me, and just as he was about to falsify his quotation by offering me his hand,—for that must have been his object,—you returned. But say not a word—I have a trap laid for him in which he will fall: promise me, as you love me, not to say one word to him; leave him to me: I dare say you think me passionately fond of him—and so I am still; I cannot tear him from me, for I feel my affection fixed upon him. I love *you*, it is true," she con-

tinued, smiling, "but only as I should love my father confessor and my friend."

"What!" replied Douglass, "*only* that!"

"Do not continue," said Amelia, "or I must inflict the punishment of banishment.—How dare you, sir," she said laughingly, "talk of love even to me? I am a droll girl, I know; but I am one who, independent of the ties of virtue and religion, can take advantage of the experience of others."

"But, Amelia," replied Robert, "what has all this to do with leading to my destruction?"

"That is a question I will not answer until the day after to-morrow. Now I must go and see Julia. Remember I have said that I love *you;* so I trust I shall have to make no more confessions on that account."

"She is an extraordinary girl," muttered Robert to himself when left alone. "I thought she really did love me, and I might have been induced by her beauty to have followed the course of young Houghton. I verily believe I am not only a liar, but a villain. Here am I, with a wife who loves me beyond the general love of wives—whose only will is to render me happy, whose every thought is for my welfare; and yet am I such a scoundrel, so heartlessly ungrateful, as to confess an attachment to another. Now I am cool enough; but another tremor, another dimmed look from Amelia, and since I have ceased to control my feelings, I would not answer for my affections. When once a man consents to follow indiscretion as a guide, what a scoundrel he may become!"

"Ah, Julia, my only dear, I am glad to see you so soon recovered! You must keep up your spirits for to-morrow night, for I anticipate much amusement from the tom-foolery. How is little Houghton?"

"A little better," replied Julia, "but fretful from the pain of his first tooth. Why, where is Amelia?"

"Has she not been with you, my dear?"

"No," replied Julia; "but as she is not here, I will make you a confidant in her secret. Husband and wife are legally one, and what is entrusted to me is not betrayed by my retailing it to you. Amelia is in love, desperate with—"

"Walsingham," interrupted Robert, "it can only be with him or myself, for she knows no one else."

"Well, don't flatter yourself, Robert—it is not you; but it is one of the two persons you mentioned."

"Did she tell you so?" asked Robert.

"Yes, the night before last she confessed it to me; and I, to show you a woman can keep a secret, never told you. Had you not better write to Charles?"

"Not until he has proposed to *marry* her," said Robert: "I can be her guardian and protector until then."

"He is the son of Sir William Walsingham," continued Julia.

"Indeed!" replied Robert with some surprise: "I did not know that."

"Then you must have known or cared very little about your schoolfellow,"—(a slight blush passed over Robert's face,)—"or you would have known his birth, parentage, and education."

"Faith," continued Robert, "I think I *do* know quite enough of him. But if we are to have him as a kind of connexion, we may as well make a few more inquiries; and I shall, by way of beginning, write to Stanhope."

"And that, my dear, is what I want you to do; for although Amelia has a tender, a good and affectionate heart, yet she is a woman: and even I, young as I am, know how little our sex are to be depended upon when once they have yielded up their affections to men."

Douglass left the room, and Julia was alone. She began to have some strange misgivings about Walsingham—why she knew not, for he was to her the most respectful, the most assiduous of attendants. He was more French than English in his endeavours to be useful; he watched her eyes, and seemed to divine her wish; and if those eternal attentions mentioned by the great Master of Love could have weaned Julia from her husband, she might have fallen to Walsingham. But she looked upon Robert more as a divinity than a man; her whole soul was wrapped up in his and his son's welfare and happiness. She saw the marks of care which latterly had increased upon his face; she saw him restless by day, sleepless by night; and she heard, whenever he fell into an unquiet doze, words almost inarticulate, but such as her imagination soon suited to a sentence. The fatal cards were the subject of his dreams; and although she watched him narrowly, and knew that he did not play excepting for the trifling sum of five francs with Walsingham, yet she was astonished at the pleasure, at the excitement he seemed to experience even for so trivial an amount.

To question him was useless; she had tried that over and over again. She then had recourse to the child, and by bringing it frequently to Douglass, she hoped to withdraw his attention from that which was evidently near his mind, to the child;

and here she tried all those little winning affections, which constitute the happiness of domestic life. It was useless: a settled kind of melancholy seemed stealing over him; he was every day becoming more and more indifferent to scenes around him; his mornings were passed in idleness, and the evening seemed to linger, in spite of the song of Amelia or the conversation of Julia, until the hour arrived for cards; then indeed his countenance lighted up—then he became all animation and attention; and any body but a fond woman might have seen the cause of this altered behaviour. Strange however as it may appear, Julia placed the whole to a wrong account: she had perceived—and where is the jealous woman who allows a glance to go unnoticed?—that Robert was latterly to be found with Amelia—that they spoke low, had intelligible communication by the eyes, and that he seized every opportunity of avoiding her for the society of her friend.

There is no true love without a spice of the green-eyed monster; and the ears of the suspicious are quick, and the eyes watchful. Julia had that morning been guilty of a meanness in endeavouring to overhear the conversation between Amelia and her husband; and her jealousy was more excited from the cautious tone of the voice, which counteracted all her endeavours. Now she cast her eyes over the room as if to find some note which might have been left neglected; and then, with a kind of sullen step, she retreated to her greatest comfort in all her afflictions—her infant.

She had not left the room a minute before Walsingham entered; and he advanced with the light step of a man fearful of detection. Amelia had heard the bell, and guessed who was the visiter. She approached by another door, which was partially open, and she saw him open the card-box, take out the *new* pack and substitute others; he then carefully closed the box, and going to the piano, struck a chord, as if to announce his arrival. Amelia shortly afterwards entered the room.

"I come, Miss Stanhope," said Walsingham, "to throw myself at your feet and implore your pardon for the indiscretion of which I was guilty yesterday. There are times when the most prudent may be overcome by excess of passion; it is no sin to worship an angel, and thus I now defend my own idolatry: pray pardon me this once, and my future conduct shall convince you how much I regret having occasioned your displeasure."

"The confession of a folly is the first step towards repentance," replied Amelia with a smile: "pray be seated."

"Then I am to consider that the waters of oblivion have washed out the remembrance of my fault?" said Walsingham.

"Even so, Mr. Walsingham; and I shall forget every part of yesterday's conversation: so now let us talk of *graver* matters. The masquerade to-night,—at what time will it be requisite to be there?"

"Not before eleven," replied Walsingham. But, Miss Stanhope, I have one request to make,—and it shows how bold even the repentant may become:—Will you allow me to be your protector and guide,—to have the honour of dancing with you,—in short, to warn you against those who are unknown, and be a kind of master of ceremonies upon this pleasant occasion? Of course you are aware that your mask ought only to be a half mask, the lower part consisting of black silk: it gives you more air, and is more convenient if you feel inclined to take any refreshment without showing your face. I have merely mentioned this because I thought you *one who would profit by the experience of others*, and consequently not disdain advice although it emanated from me."

"I am equally obliged, Mr. Walsingham, but Julia and myself are going closely masked, and dressed after our own fashion. I hope, with all the devotion you have declared, even to idolatry, you will not mistake some one else for me."

"I warrant, you shall see I know the difference. Surely, in the light elastic tread, the angelic figure, the soft voice, the manner so natural, and perhaps a glance at some stray portion of that raven hair, I can divine you from any other. Besides, your eyes are dark as night, and your friend's are as blue as an Italian sky."

"We have invented a plan by which you will not be able to discover us by our eyes;—in short, we have practised our intended walk, we have tried our voices even before our servant, and *she* has not detected the one from the other: and thus am I willing to forewarn you of the difficulty."

"But we can obviate that," replied Walsingham, "because I can hand you from the carriage."

"No, indeed," replied Amelia; "you will, Mr. Walsingham, do no such thing. We intend, when we are dressed, to walk into this room,—not to speak one word—to walk arm-in-arm into the masquerade; and there you may take me, and I will cheerfully dance with you, if you can discover me."

"But let me implore you, my dear Miss Amelia, to think of the consequences should I whisper to your friend what I would

were only audible to yourself: she might imagine me capable of endeavouring to supplant her husband. And besides, I must tell you that I had hoped for this night's conversation with ceaseless anxiety; and now, when the cup of pleasure is so near my lips, to dash it from them is cruel! Let me implore you to give me this slight proof of your esteem, and confide some secret mode by which I may know you beyond a doubt." (Here he took her hand and tenderly squeezed it.) "Nay, Amelia, as you value my happiness do not balk my present intention."

Amelia turned away her head, and curiosity, that fatal gift to women, prompted her to say, "she dared not, for Julia would be so angry." (Still he retained her hand.)

"That is half an assent," replied Walsingham; "and Julia's anger can shortly be removed. Once more let me entreat you, Amelia, for I confess much of my future happiness depends upon this night's conversation."

"Indeed, Mr. Walsingham, I dare not. And yet," she continued, "if you promise never to reveal this treachery of mine—"

"Never, never, by Heaven!" interrupted Walsingham.

"Then I will tell you. I intend to wear this small flower in my band; and going to her desk, she showed one flower of the jessamine, so small that it certainly would not have been discernible but for the black ground on which the white flower was to be placed. "Thus you will know me. Now mind, Mr. Walsingham, I rely upon your honour not to betray the secret to Mr. Douglass; for I could not have been guilty of this indiscretion, had I not—"

"Do, pray, continue, Amelia; do gratify my vanity by ending that sentence."

"No, no, Mr. Walsingham; you are vain enough already, and your vanity shall be my excuse."

"Why, Amelia, you find excuses as well as that learned Frenchman who never ate suppers until he found that the moon was a good aider of digestion!"

"Well, Mr. Walsingham, when we eat our supper this night, perhaps I will continue the sentence. But I must replace this flower; for if Julia sees it, she will suspect that I have allowed my curiosity to overcome my discretion."

"Dear angel!" murmured Walsingham to himself, "the time will come, I hope and trust, when you will have to confess your *indiscretions* to me."

Amelia opened a book, and having placed the flower in security, she turned over one or two leaves.

"What may your studies be, Amelia?" asked Walsingham.

"Oh, merely a novel," was the reply, "which I love to pore over—I am so very fond of them."

"They are the worst kind of reading, my dear girl; for novels do great injury to the cause of sound and wholesome literature, and sometimes depreciate morality. It is by these light works that the taste of readers is destroyed for useful books, and the facts of history and the descriptions of poetry appear dull and insipid. Do you like poetry?"

"Very much indeed," was the reply; "and I often read at night when the rest of our family are asleep."

"Ha! Walsingham," said Douglass, entering, "I am glad to see you! You dine with us to-day, and we will all go together to the masquerade.—By-the-by, I wanted to speak to you alone."

"Oh, I take the hint, Robert;" and Amelia left the room.

"Have you secured our dresses?"

"I have," said Walsingham; "and you will find them in your ante-chamber.—But stop; I want to see how much taller you are than myself." Both parties stood before the glass, and they were exactly of a height; although Walsingham, from being the thinnest, looked the tallest.

"The dress," Douglass continued, "will obviate all that; and you must mind, when I go to have a desperate coup, that you enact my part, and play the husband and the protector. Do you know, Walsingham, I am getting quite a woman; and I doubt if any one of the female sex, even in love, was half so superstitious as I am. I have been telling my fortune by the cards, and three times I found the king of spades at the bottom. Now, if Captain Rabi foretold his death at the battle of Austerlitz* by the ten of spades being always in that position, and if his wife's dreams were to be realised, I see no reason why I should not share the same fate: and if so, I shall be ruined, or near it, to-night."

"And yet you foolishly go and throw away your money! Surely you can amuse yourself sufficiently by écarté, and if the stakes are not high enough, I have no objection to increase them, so as to allow you to regain the trifle I have won. But

* See a very clever paper (indeed they all are so,) in the United Service Journal for January 1835, entitled "Captain Rabi, or the Ten of Spades," in the Sketches of a Foreign Military Life.

why, with all this dreary prognostication, allow Fate to triumph, when by a little resolution you may defy her? Surely, surely, my good friend, you have excitement enough at home."

"True, I have what many men would call enough, and my losses are more that sufficient to counterbalance the pleasure: but I always think I play to a disadvantage with you; your knowledge of the game gives you a superiority; and however insignificant the trade may be, it requires *some* apprenticeship."

"If you think *that*, I will most willingly give you one game in seven, and we can play the *partie* for any increased sum you like,—or try backgammon."

"No; backgammon I hate: but I will take with pleasure the odds you offer, and I will play you this evening for a thousand pounds the best of the seven games."

"Agreed, agreed," said Walsingham: "when we begin, we will play that match.—Surely, I heard the handle of the door turn!"

Douglass went to look; but there was no one in the room, although he himself thought he heard the farther door shut.

"Fancy, fancy," he continued. "You'll be here, then, Walsingham, at six o'clock: you can dress in my room for the masquerade."

CHAPTER III.

That the conduct of Amelia was strange—nay, very strange—there can be no doubt. In the first place, she had at one time entertained a high opinion of Walsingham; but his sinister behaviour, his libertine conversation and manner, a little alarmed her; and now, although she thought she saw in him a man of a very suspicious character, yet she loved him—her heart was no longer her own, and all the arguments with which she endeavoured to school herself, failed to wean her of her affection. The circumstance of having seen Walsingham remove the cards, the constant fretfulness of Douglass's temper, convinced her that gaming occupied his time. Again, she could not suspect her lover of a dishonourable action—it was some trick he intended; and she, to counteract this, purchased new cards and substituted them for those which Walsingham had placed. Yet those of his were in the proper wrappers, and evidently had not been opened:—she turned them over and over, examined them with feminine curiosity, but she refrained from breaking the covers, being resolved to laugh at the failure of his trick. She resolved to sit by him during the evening's play, for she had overheard the match made for one thousand pounds. Though she believed and lent implicit confidence to the history of Walsingham's birth, the quarrel with his father, and his refusal to marry, yet this changing of the cards, done so suspiciously,—the guarded manner he had surveyed the room,—the caution, the cunning,—never once made it occur to her that her lover could be a swindler. He was evidently a contradiction;—onemoment ridiculing the most sacred obligation; the next, inculcating morality by his conversation—(his opinion upon light and frivolous reading, for instance:) and only once had he ever swerved from the strict manner of a gentleman; and that was when, in a hurried and impassioned tone, he expressed his sentiments warmly, and actually embraced her.

But Douglass had known him as an old school-fellow—certainly had encouraged the affection he must have perceived:

Walsingham dined daily at the house, and contributed to the amusement of the society ; for, independent of his card-playing for such a *trifle*, he sang well, and was accomplished.

To a girl of Amelia's age, with hoyden spirits and lively imagination, these different and conflicting testimonies were only likely to embarrass her. With all his faults, she admired him—and admiration in a woman is very nearly akin to love : indeed, had Walsingham, when he so rudely embraced her, followed the kiss or preceded it by a proposition of marriage, there can be no doubt but that Amelia would have accepted him. Now, in spite of her fondness, she had discovered him to be a gamester, and by way of saving *him* more than Douglass from perdition, she thought of telling Julia. But then, the very idea that her husband, under the pretence of playing for five francs, was risking a thousand pounds,—the duplicity of the action, the evident concealment from her of his actual behaviour,—would, Amelia knew right well, have occasioned a suspicion which must have ended in a decided difference.

On her own observation then she relied, hoping to save both, yet willing not to discover any thing to the prejudice of Walsingham, for she was aware of the affection she bore him, and the almost *love* she felt for Douglass. With the former her intimacy had so gradually increased, that, like the advance of age, it was imperceptible to those who were nearest. We progress so gradually from the first formal "Miss Stanhope," to the unintentional "Amelia ;" we grow from the formal "Good morning," and "Good night," to a warm cordial shake of the hand ;—then (surely the Devil is the plotter !) we in a playful mood, and, Heaven knows without the least idea of any thing but merriment, kiss the hand—alas ! how imperceptibly we get to the lips, and then marry.

Walsingham had retired to his apartments : he lived in a neat well-appointed *entresol* in the Rue de la Chausseé d'Antin, in which were perceptible the luxuries of gentility. On this round marble table, that everlasting piece of cold furniture in every house in Paris, was a good sprinkling of good books ; a Bible and a Prayer-book were amongst the number,—for if the Devil can quote Scripture, he must have had a book to learn it from. On one side of the table was the "Magic Book," a work likely to supersede even the talents of Mademoiselle Norman, the greatest impostor of any age, and a woman who rolls in luxury by administering to the *cupidity* of the female sex in every sense of the word and pun. A large clock in imitation of a

cathedral stood over the mantel-piece, and struck the hour in that deep and solemn tone well in unison with the building from which it emanated. The room was carpeted and comfortable; the wood fire blazed in the gate, whilst the crackle of the fuel and the sparkle of the flame gave the apartment a lively and desirable appearance. On one side, and with his back to the light, reclined Walsingham in an easy chair. His occupations were various: he had been reading, he had been discovering by means of the Magic Book his future fortune; and he now was busily employed in dealing five cards to his supposed adversary and five to himself, and then turning up a *king*. It was neither the first nor the fortieth time that he had taken his daily practice: for as an opera-dancer he is obliged to twirl upon one toe, and caper upon both legs for hours and hours together, twisting himself into various postures, called by fashion, elegant; and as those who sing and squall Italian bravuras must by practice keep their voices and throats in order; so must the professed swindler undergo his daily labour in order to deceive the unwary so completely that the suspicion shall not arise.

"That will do for to-day," said this arch villain to himself, reclining upon his chair, "and that thousand pounds is safe. Now have I got a flat in my net, and I can hold him fast.—Let me see; before he came to Paris I was down to my last five hundred franc note, and how I got that my conscience takes care to remind me; now I am worth no less than three thousand pounds, and by ten o'clock this night I shall be worth four.

"That girl's arrival was the making of me; for now I have driven him into private play, and am reaping the golden harvest of my own ingenuity. He talks of being ruined, or likely to be so by his play to-night; I must somehow hinder that—his money must be mine, and I am mistaken if Amelia shall not be mine without benefit of clergy. I have done this well; my observations are moral, my behaviour to his wife distant, reserved, yet friendly; but a curse upon my tongue and my folly which betrayed my intentions to Amelia before my plan was ripe! I must look up some old French quotations about love and friendship, for English girls listen more readily to either Italian or French. Amelia must be the link by which I shall enchain Douglass; and once independent *again*—once in a situation to live retired and like a gentleman, I can cast off my old and my bad habits, and appear in a country town in England like a snake which has just cast its skin, all gold and brightness; although I must keep clear of Worcester and that neigh-

bourhood. Now I am above want; but as the garden *is* to be robbed, as we said at school, I might just as well have a pull at the golden fruit, as allow it to be plucked and preserved by the proprietor of the Salon.

"The book foretells me bad luck to-night: be it so—my ingenuity shall conquer fortune. And when he is ruined, as, poor fool he must be! and he has sent his wife back to England a beggar, I will retain him here: his bills shall be paid—his credit above suspicion, and I will employ him to my own advantage; he shall be initiated into the new mysteries, and by making him a villain to avoid poverty, I will enrich myself at the hazard of Douglass. So now for a few verses of the Bible, a few proverbs of Solomon, a few extracts from that contradiction of a man Voltaire; and what with these and my own aptitude at making quotations, the deuce is in it if I cannot deceive the women, and make that fool believe me."

His bell rang, and Douglass was announced; but at the first vibration of sound, the cards and the magic had been removed, and Walsingham was reading a prophecy of Isaiah.

"Ah! Douglass, I am glad to see *you* here! for your visits are, 'like angels, few and far between.' To be sure, I always forestall your intention, for with such fascination as you possess at home, no wonder we poor fellows feel the attraction and own the power."

"That's a fine speech," said Robert, "out of that book:—let us see—the Bible!! that indeed!"

"It is my custom," replied Walsingham, "daily to read a certain portion: I find that I endure mortification the better, and I become more contented with life by the prospects held out of eternity. I always was a serious character, and, although sometimes driven for amusement——"

"Into hell," interrupted Robert.

"Yes," continued Walsingham, "yet I always repaired the mischief by a chapter of consolation from this book."

"Every thing in unison," said Robert: "the church for a clock, to remind you of salvation and time. Why I never should have given you credit for half so much religion as I see before me."

"I have always been a misjudged man," replied Walsingham: "but I care not for the opinion of the *world*, as long as my friend knows me as an honest man."

"Talking of honesty," replied Robert,—"I want you to practise a little deception for me."

"I fear you could not have selected a worse man," said Walsingham: "but, as long as it is innocent, I will assist you if I can."

"It is this," continued Robert:—"My wife knows that the house opposite to mine is the Salon—*the* hell. How are we to avoid her knowing this when we go to the masquerade? She would as soon tread the boards of the black gentleman's dominion down below as venture into that sink of iniquity, which she dreads more than all the world put together. *You* must manage to deceive her."

"My dear Douglass, you should have acted openly with her, and told her that it was *the Salon.* I have always found that 'honesty was the best policy,' and especially to forward domestic happiness: the wife and the husband should be one."

"Oh, curse your morality and your lecture!" interrupted Douglass; "one would fancy you were a bishop going to give advice and a blessing. You *must* manage this; you must speak to my coachman. I care not how it is done,—but it must be done,—or you will lose your masqued chat with Amelia, and I shall lose my play."

"Cunning fellow," replied Walsingham; "you have well chosen the means to seduce me to your wishes!—Well, let me see!—Oh, I can manage it:—I will bring *my* carriage; *yours of course* is gone to the coachmaker's.—Make your mind easy; I will arrange it all. It is so innocent a deception, that I do not mind participating in the plot; more especially as her aversion is founded on erroneous principle."

"And I suppose," interrupted Douglass, "Amelia has nothing to do with it."

"Sit down for a moment, and let us talk about that little divinity. She is a charming girl!—such expression, such a graceful figure, such nobleness of countenance! and as for eyes—"

"They go through you," said Robert with mock gravity; "like a flash of lightning through a gooseberry bush."

"I have been," continued Walsingham, "reading Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy since I left you; and do pray tell me, for you by this time may be considered a judge, if he is right in his idea of matrimony. 'Marriage,' he says, (I learnt it by heart,) 'is honourable, a blessed calling; it breeds true peace, tranquillity, content, and happiness; quâ nulla est, aut fuit unquam, sanctior conjunctio, as Daphnæus in Plutarch could well prove; et quæ generi humano immortalitatem parat, when they live

without jarring, scolding, lovingly, as they should do, as Seneca lived with his Paulina, Abraham and Sarah, Artemisia and Mausolus, &c. &c. There is no pleasure in the world comparable to it; 'tis summum mortalitatis bonum, hominum divûmque voluptas, alma Venus. Latet enim in muliere aliquid majus, potentiusque omnibus aliis humanis voluptatibus, as one holds. There is something in a woman beyond all human delight; a magnetic virtue, a charming quality, an occult and powerful motive.' Ay, Douglass ?"

"Good morning, Walsingham. But before I go—did you learn all that Latin at school ?"

"Not at Winchester, Douglass ! Good morning."

"So, he is out of hearing, poor fellow !—and I have preciously fooled him ! he is just the man who cannot believe that the Bible may be in one hand whilst the other is in his pocket. Now to arrange a few more packs of cards; and cleverly enough I have placed them for to-night ! To be sure, if a man has a right to be proud, it is when he can govern his neighbours, and make their wealth his, by the mere turning of a card. The educated and uneducated agree in this,—and nothing shows the extent of civilisation more than the multitude of pickpockets. The Caffre chief answered well, when he was asked, 'What is the chief end of man ?' and he responded, '*to 'steal cattle.*' Every man ought to have a profession, and I have mine : it has ugly names, —such as, swindler, gambler, cheat, blackleg, and so on; but the fashionable French appellation is *chevalier d'industrie*,— and what is more honourable than an industrious gentleman. Poor Douglass ! he is gone home to his wife quite convinced that my mind is running riot on marriage; and he will tell her all he remembers of my quotations, with some few additions; and she will believe it, and Amelia will believe it—for girls are always fond of admiration, and always credulous—and this will look to her like sincere repentance. I verily believe there is no compliment, however absurd, but that some ugly woman would believe it;—and in regard to beauty, one must follow the vulgar saying, 'Put it on generously; some of it will stick.'"

"Monsieur," said a French valet, as he entered, "votre cabriolet est à la porte."

"Bon," was the reply; and after arranging his dress with some care, he entered his vehicle and drove up the Champs Elysées into the Bois de Boulogne, to keep an appointment with a French milliner.

The dinner hour arrived, and Walsingham was punctual to

his time. Julia was present, and to her he directed his conversation.

"I saw," he began, "your charming companion reading a novel this morning, and I took upon myself to recommend her other pursuits."

"She would gladly listen, I am sure," replied Julia, "to any advice one so well qualified as yourself might please to give."

Walsingham bowed, and continued—"I took the liberty because I have always thought that the passion for romances and novels originate in a morbid, fluttering, fidgety curiosity, and produces a sickly sensibility of mind, which is equally adverse to the acquisition of useful knowledge and sound morality. Now, useful knowledge tends to the realisation of wealth, and to the proper disposition of time."

"Humph!" said Walsingham to himself; "that is what the sailors call, getting to windward of the lady."

"I am quite of your opinion," replied Julia: "and when time is properly occupied, it enhances domestic felicity, and makes life desirable."

"We read in the works of the great French philosopher," continued Walsingham, "'Les plaisirs ne sont pas assez solides pour souffrir qu'on les approfondisse; il ne faut que les effleurer. Ils ressemblent à ces terres marécageuses sur lesquelles on est obligé de courir légèrement, sans y arrêter jamais le pied.' But with all due deference and respect to so great an authority, I think that by the proper disposition of time, life may be spent so as to make each moment a pleasure; and I cannot but think that your view is more consonant with comfort than the words of the philosopher."

"Do you, gay as you are, Mr. Walsingham, find time to devote to study?" asked Julia.

"Study!" interrupted Douglass; "why, he is a real bookworm: he repeated half Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy to me, and I caught him poring over the Bible with more application than half the bench of bishops."

"The Bible!" ejaculated Amelia, who had paid great attention to the conversation; and then she said to herself, "Then my suspicions, thank God, cannot be true."

"Is there any thing *very* extraordinary," replied Walsingham, addressing Amelia, "in a man and a Christian reading the sacred writings? I am sorry *Miss* Stanhope formed so bad an opinion of one who has endeavoured to emulate her virtue and her religion."

"That's a shot between wind and water," continued the villain to himself.

Amelia blushed, and said, "I am sure, Mr. Walsingham, you will forgive my rudeness. I was quite aware from your talent that you devoted much time to study; but I did not think that at present, during the *day*, you read that book."

"Indeed your suspicions, Miss Stanhope, are founded on fact; for I have latterly placed you upon the shrine, and spent my days and nights in worshipping an angel."

"Now," replied Amelia with some vivacity, "I really do not believe you; for that compliment was at the expense of truth."

"I assure you, Miss Stanhope, you are again mistaken; and you will find, I hope, the longer we are acquainted, that no fervent Catholic ever bent knee to the figure of the Virgin with greater adoration than I kneel at the shrine of Truth. Do you remember those beautiful lines, which form a prayer I often offer up?—

"Before thy mystic altar, heavenly Truth,
I kneel in manhood, as I knelt in youth.
Thus let me kneel, till this dull form decay,
And life's last shade be brighten'd by thy ray;
Then shall my soul, now lost in clouds below,
Soar without bounds, without consuming glow."*

"How very beautiful!" said Amelia, whilst her eyes were directed towards Walsingham. Julia looked at Robert, and Robert understood the meaning: it was a confession of admiration so near *love*, that even Douglass, absorbed as he was with plans for the evening, understood it well; it was one of those glances which are only given when the mind is concentrated upon one object, and that object a human being. From this moment there appeared in Amelia a more anxious wish to listen than to talk: and some impudent fellows have asserted, that whenever a woman can forego her disposition to chatter for the gratification of listening, she must be very much in love with the speaker. Walsingham had now surrounded himself in a kind of impregnable fortress which the blind eye of love could never penetrate: both Julia and Amelia looked upon him as a man sincere in principle, moral in his behaviour, charming in his discourse; his attention was devotedness, and he acted his part so beautifully that he began to fancy himself in love.

* Sir W. Jones.

Conversation, in which Walsingham led the van, was occasionally relieved by the dishes,—for, as Dr. Johnson says, "the uniformity of the world must be sometimes diversified, and the vacuity of conversation sometimes supplied,"—until the jolly hour of reinvigoration had passed. At this dinner all the party regarded Walsingham with greater respect; for his conversation, although occasionally light, seemed always to bear the impress of truth, and he never hazarded a remark which malice could twist into levity. The cards were brought, and Amelia was at once disarmed from all suspicion by Walsingham saying, "My dear Robert, I think it quite unfair that you should always supply the cards; so I have thrown in a pack or two this morning." But had not the girl been blind, she would have remarked, at least to herself, "Then why *change* the cards—why remove so many packs to replace them by others?" But the idea escaped her: she really believed him honourable and sincere; and it might be that she would not now have resented a kiss as she foolishly did, or more foolishly publish it to the world. There was a look of recognition, as much as to say, "This begins the match;" and forthwith the cards were dealt.

When once a suspicion is excited, it requires confirmation strong as holy writ before it is subdued. Thus Amelia, having once imbibed the notion that there must have been something premeditated, could not, even with all the compliments which had been lavished, entirely rid herself of the suspicion.

"I shall," she said to Walsingham, "take a lesson from your mode of playing; so let me sit close to you. You need not fear; my countenance will not betray a good hand, or sadden at a bad one; and although I am a woman, I shall not say a word."

"You seem, Mimie, my dear," replied Douglass, "to know one of the six inherent failings of your sex; and let us see if you can master it."

The first thing that struck Amelia was the sullen manner in which this proposition was received. True love never can be too close; and Amelia thought that Walsingham might as well have said something more than, "As you please, Miss Stanhope." The next observation she made was the peculiar manner in which Walsingham shuffled the cards, and the expression of surprise which he could not conceal when he evidently found that the cards were not those which he had substituted. He

gave one game out of seven, and he lost the first; making two against him.

"These cards run against me," he said; "let us change them:" and he got up himself, went to the card-box, and brought two more packs. Amelia's face had grown quite pale, and she looked ill; which Julia, who sat by her husband, and who watched his play, perceived. Again did Amelia remark the peculiar manner, and again she saw the same disappointed look and angry scowl which grew over his features. He then began to shuffle the cards in such a manner as to see them. This, however, was unnoticed by Amelia; and although a king did occasionally turn up, yet such was the general run of good luck which for a wonder seemed to grow to Douglass, that for the first time since he began this certain ruin, private play, he found himself a winner.

The sharp manner of Walsingham did not escape Amelia: she saw the man who had spoken of the benefit of "keeping one's temper" not a little agitated; and as he had declared himself to her a beggar on two thousand a year, and knowing the match was for one, she inwardly hoped this practical lesson would wean him from high play, and teach him to be contented with his lot.

Douglass instantly offered him his revenge, but Walsingham refused it, begging Amelia to play, which she instantly did; but she watched her lover's closely, and he amused himself shuffling the pack.

The time soon came when the ladies proposed to retire in order to dress themselves. Walsingham seized the opportunity of Amelia's absence, and challenged Robert to play another partie for two thousand;—it was agreed, played, and won by Walsingham. The game ran even until four all; when Walsingham dealt, and the king was turned up.

It was during a slight paroxysm of rage, which Robert could not control, that the ladies entered. Both were dressed exactly alike, and both had taken every precaution to secure themselves against detection. For some time both gentlemen regarded them with scrutiny: it was impossible to discover the difference of colour in the eyes, but Walsingham saw the jessamine blossom, and in passing to dress, he took the hand of her who wore it, and gave it a most sentimental squeeze. No sooner had they shut the door than Julia reported progress, and asked if Walsingham always gave those very tender squeezes. Both laugh-

ed, and made up during the absence of the men for the silence they had sworn to observe previous to going into the room.

Soon the gentlemen were ready, and both came in unmasked. The dominos were exactly the same; but as no suspicion had been excited concerning their determination—for the conversation overheard by Amelia was too vague to admit of any positive conclusion,—Walsingham asked for the tickets, the carriage was announced, and Julia was handed by him to the vehicle.

CHAPTER IV.

WALSINGHAM, by way of putting the matter right, began the conversation about the carriage, saying, "that his coachman was a kind of owl, and was never known to be indisposed during the night; that he was hardly ever used during the day, and that, like all half-worked animals, he was getting fat and lazy."

The carriage whisked round one corner, then flew round another; and after ten minutes' driving, it drove into the court-yard of the Salon, and the party alighted. In the ante-room the tickets were given, and the ladies, taking each other's arm, walked into the receiving-room. The different commissioners bowed, but none spoke; and thus passing into the circular room, they were fortunate enough to find a sofa disengaged, and they sat down.

In this room was the dancing;—here were grave-looking Turks waltzing with Sisters of Charity,—harlequins lacking activity, and clowns seriously dull. Even in France a masquerade seems a dismal affair; one would imagine that the company wore the pasteboard blind in order to slink into their own selves, and to enjoy solitude in the presence of thousands. The music had begun,—the giddy waltz was at its height: Walsingham whispered to Julia, believing her to be Amelia, and asked her to dance.

The lady responded in a feigned voice, that she was a stranger to that dance, and that it appeared neither graceful, elegant, nor decent.

"This," replied Walsingham, "is sheer fastidiousness; nothing shows more beautifully the elegant figure of a woman, and surely the simple affair of supporting a lady could hardly be termed indecent. Indeed, dearest Amelia," he said, "one possessing your angelic symmetry might venture, robed as you are now, without the slightest indelicacy; for so long has that envied domino—envied, since it covers your person—been made, that one might as well have looked for a foot belonging to a Queen of Spain, and incurred as great a penalty in finding it."

"I cannot comprehend you," replied Julia. "Do Spanish women wear their dresses so long? See! there is a nun with petticoats—if any—short enough for an opera-dancer."

"She has chosen some country peasant's costume. For Madame Daunoy, in her Memoirs upon Spain, mentions 'that the Spanish women thought no favour so great as to show their gallants their *feet*: it was high treason to speak of the queen's legs.' And an instance is recorded of the wife of Charles the Second, who was thrown from her horse, but whose foot was retained in the stirrup. A cavalier seeing the accident, ran to her assistance; but having unfortunately, in disentangling her, touched her leg, he was instantly condemned to transportation. It was such a transport to touch it, that had you been her, *I* would willingly have undergone the pleasure and the penalty."

"I really cannot waltz," resumed Julia; "not from any apprehension of showing my feet, but because such tetotum twirling would make me giddy: but ask Julia."

"No, no," replied Walsingham; "my attentions I dedicate to you. Married women should never dance; their figures are always spoilt by having children. And besides, although I like her, I have no hesitation in saying I adore you.—You really must allow me to support that taper waist, and feel your light angelic figure."

"No, Mr. Walsingham, flattered as I may be," replied Julia, "with your compliments, yet waltz I will not: but I will dance the first quadrille with you. I must tell Julia," she continued, "of my intentions,"—and she whispered in the ear of Amelia a slight account of the progress of deception. In the mean time, Douglass, believing that he was destined to sit by his wife, and a little soured by his loss, began to Amelia his remarks.

"That fellow Walsingham is playing the agreeable to that weather-hen Amelia; and she is coquetting and flirting with him prodigiously. I begin to wish she was away—back in

England, or that Charles would come over here. You women are so cursed unmanageable when you are in love!"

"Did you find me so, dear Robert," replied Amelia, "before you married me?"

"No; you were steadier than Amelia; and I never found you giving me permission to take a kiss, and then making a virtue of mentioning it: there was something like mischief-making or deception in that! 'Faith, I believe she would as soon kiss Walsingham as not!"

"You wrong her, Robert!" replied the girl, her face firing with the sudden blush which had flown to it, and almost consumed the mask which fortunately concealed it: "but I dare say you would not mind kissing her a little."

"Nonsense!" replied Robert; "she is like a sister to me; and kissing them is as insipid as eating cold veal without salt."

"Now, confess, Robert,—did you never kiss her, insipid as it might be?"

"Never, by heavens! I would as soon think of kissing a cow. She is in my eyes neither handsome, accomplished, nor pleasing;—her manners are those of a hoyden spoilt child; and one might as well use a pea shooter for a telescope, as extract either sense or propriety from such a *girouette*."

"That *is* pleasant," thought Amelia to herself: "Listeners never hear any good of themselves, is as old as the hills, and as true as the gospel. But now I will try *him*."

"I believe you are more right than wrong in your conclusions of Amelia," she began; "but what think you of Walsingham? Is he sincere in his affections? or is he, like the rest of you, ready to pledge his soul for any woman to ransom?"

"I think he is rather smitten," replied Douglass; "and I pity him if ever he marries her,—she will lead him a devil of a life! She is, like quicksilver, eternally on the *move*, and consequently can never make a *steady* wife." And he laughed at his own conceit.

Just at this moment, Julia whispered to Amelia the conversation with Walsingham; and she, in return, discovered that she had been tolerated rather than welcomed.

"The waltz had ceased; and Walsingham, anxious to secure a place, gave his hand to his fancied Amelia, and led her to the dance: but, some difficulty arising from each party being pre-engaged, Robert consented to walk through a dance with his own wife, and in blessed ignorance led Amelia opposite Julia. Very little conversation occurred during the quadrille; numbers

had crowded upon numbers, and the ear of a man was not far from the ear of the next lady.

In these exhibitions the English in general are very averse to being thought English; and not unfrequently they take the surest mode of detection, that of speaking French: whereas if they mutilated their own "grunting, guttural language," they might succeed better than in speaking through the mouth what ought to be sounded through the nose. However, few remarked, for few cared: those gay Lotharios who had previously made assignations knew their ladies by some secret device, and it only required to see them walk the dance to know what place had the honour of their births. There is a light fantastic kind of tiptoe exhibition which a French person cannot disguise; it is a national mark, stamped as strongly on their feet as the broad countenance of a Tartar on his barbarian visage.

If a French woman were dancing in the garb of a sultana, she would put her hands in the same position as a poodle dog when told to beg; and when the Catholic religion shall give place to another, perhaps that of the Twirlers and Jumpers would be most convenient to their conscience, and the easiest to understand. No sooner, therefore, did Julia and Amelia move in the first figure than they were noted as English and regarded as such. They walked exactly alike; and Walsingham, who seized the eight-bar license to talk which a quadrille affords, commenced by wondering "how his dear Amelia could so easily imitate the rather ungraceful step of her friend Julia."

"Nothing is easier," replied Julia; "we are nearly of an age, and I always thought we walked in the same manner."

"A most amazing blindness, my dear Amelia, on your part! One has all the elasticity of unwedded youth; the other, the stately gravity of the mother. Dress yourselves any how and you could not deceive me; for Love, they say, is blind,—and yet no one possesses such piercing, jealous eyes as the little god."

"Hush!" said Julia, apprehensive that they might be overheard.

Douglass, imagining he had his wife to dance with, did not undergo the fatigue of making conversation; and when the music ceased, he led her to the same sofa on which was seated his old adviser, the old gentleman who sat next to him at the dinner. He was watching the different ladies, and seeing one approach, he made way for her, and the three were seated. The elderly gentleman cast a scrutinizing glance at his neighbours:

the lady he evidently did not know, but there was something in the manner of Douglass which seemed to recall him to his memory.

At masquerade the approach of any man is allowed, providing the conversation is such that delicacy is not shocked, or the prerogative of women assailed. The old gentleman began in French, and Amelia, who was no proficient in the language, hazarded a reply.

"Ah! English," replied the stranger; "I thought I saw you dance: I judged only from that and the voice; for French women, although they keep their mouths full of bonbons, have not the sweetest intonation, and they cannot refrain from dancing whenever they hear the squeak of a fiddle."

The compliment tempted Amelia to continue the dialogue, which she did by asking "if he knew who was the pretty figure dressed as a gipsy."

"I imagine," he replied, "it is a lady whose form might warrant the imitation of La Esmeralda, but whose virtue would rather lose by the comparison. I suppose that brilliant officer is intended for her Phœbus: he will look brighter by-and-by, when he gets near the gaming-table."

"What!" interrupted Amelia, "is there a gaming-table *here?*" and the stress she laid upon the word occasioned the reply of the old gentleman.

"*Here!*" said he, as Douglass gave a gentle and a useless nudge; "*here!*—why, where do you think you are? This is the superior pandemonium of Paris—the Salon of the Rue de Richelieu—the licensed plunder abode of the rich and the unwary. How do you think this midnight revelry is paid for, but from the pockets of the company? This is the house which made Cavendish a villain, and Houghton a suicide."

A thrill of horror ran through Amelia, which communicated itself to Douglass; and who, believing it to be his wife who had procured the unwelcome intelligence, sat motionless like a black statue, as he felt the hand of Amelia passed through his arm as if to cower for shelter.

"In what street, did you say, sir?" said Amelia, her voice faltering into its natural tone, which convinced Douglass of the deception which had been practised, and came to restore his presence of mind.

"In what street?" replied the elderly gentleman; "why, in the Rue de Richelieu, exactly opposite the Hôtel des Princes, the second door from the Boulevard. There, madam, is latitude

and longitude, bearings and distance, as the sailors say." And before he could continue his answer more than to say, "that it was a place where all the vices congregated, and where even the figure of Esmeralda might be purchased," he rose from his seat, and addressing a lady in French, withdrew.

"Amelia, *Amelia*," said Douglass, "your anxiety has betrayed you; for *I* cannot be deceived in *your voice*. Hear me, listen to me, and as you would spare Julia the dreadful shock she would undergo did she discover the deception which has been practised, promise me never to allow one word of this to escape your lips. I am alone to blame; my cursed disposition to gaming led me to urge Walsingham to get the tickets. Nay, when he first introduced me here, which was long previous to your arrival, he warned me of the threatening danger; and I it was who overcame all his arguments against it—who dissipated his scruples even this very morning as to the circuitous route we were to take before we drove into the court-yard. And now most sincerely do I wish I had listened to his excellent advice: he warned me that some cursed unexpected rencontre would discover the whole, and urged me again and again not to come myself, or to allow your curiosity to be gratified in such a place."

"Robert! Robert! where have you brought us! Why, it is a den of infamy, where no honest woman ought to appear. Cannot you take us home immediately?"

"Impossible," he replied; "Julia would then discover and despise me. I pledged my word after my first serious losses never to enter this door again; and now not only to have violated my own sacred promise, but to have made her an eye-witness to my guilt, would distract her. No; let the evening go on—let Fate do her worst. In this room are many of the most exemplary of the metropolis, guided, like you, by mere curiosity: but do you promise me, for your word is not broken, never to mention this; and on you," he said as he took her hand, "surely, surely, dearest Amelia, I may rely."

"I promise," she said. "Now answer me this,—did Walsingham really warn you from this place?"

"Indeed, my dear Amelia, he did; and had you heard him when in his glowing terms he spoke of the ruin which might follow—when he addressed me as a husband and a father, you would not think your affections misplaced. Nay, Amelia, do not start so;—I have watched you both—I have seen the tell-tale eyes sparkling with delight—and I observed to-day at din-

ner the expression of gratification which you betrayed when you heard of his studies and his occupations. You told me something of warning me from my destruction: he was that warning voice which spoke in vain."

That Amelia really loved Walsingham, although she had for a moment harboured what she now considered a base ungenerous thought, there can be no doubt. The confirmation from Douglass's lips of his honourable conduct dissipated all apprehension, and she was anxious enough for the return of Julia in order to possess the jessamine, and to hear from his own lips the declaration she anticipated in consequence of the morning's conversation.

When the dance was finished, Walsingham led Julia to a small room which is beyond the rouge-et-noir apartment; and that room—for the excitement was elsewhere—was vacant. They sat down on a sofa only calculated to hold two; and Walsingham, taking her hand, commenced thus: "Thank heavens, Amelia! I have now an opportunity of a little *tête-à-tête* with you, not likely to be disturbed by any." Julia attempted to withdraw her hand; but the squeeze was so warm and affectionate, that she, poor soul! was soon overcome. "Nay, nay," continued Walsingham, "my dear, this is treating me unkindly; you surely would not wish to extinguish a flame your own bright self has created: nay, you are too generous, and, I hope, too much disinclined." (Here Julia hung down her head, almost bursting with an inclination to laugh, but which prudence controlled.) Walsingham having tempted her to look at him, he endeavoured to catch her eye through the green gauze she had placed over the holes in the mask: his were those of immodest desire—an indescribable look, half melting in moisture, and yet glaring with fire: it is a look which none can imitate—none describe. "Amelia," he continued, "surely I need not repeat what you must have felt. I love you, fondly, sincerely, truly, and often do I dream of dear delights, perhaps never to be mine. Answer me, my own Amelia,—my long-loved charming girl: am I to be fortunate in possessing that which monarchs might envy?" Julia acted well; hung down her head, flourished her handkerchief, forgetting she had a mask, and put it to her eyes, forgetting there was a veil of gauze to impede its utility:—it was a kind of confirmation that her heart and head were so occupied that she had forgotten all but Walsingham and her tears. He continued,

"That silence is the eloquence of consent. And now, dearest

girl, to think of all the passion of unshackled love; to think with that great master of human feelings—

"Oh, happy state! when souls each other draw,—
When love is liberty, and nature law!"

No foolish tie—sanctified indeed, by mere human breath, binding two people together, the very bonds of which are the first inducement to our nature to struggle to be free. No, dearest; you, I know, would rather say with Eloisa,—that fond, that impassioned creature, whose love could never die, because it never was tied and bound by the officious churchman—

"Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
Himself, his throne, his power, I'd scorn them all.
Not Cæsar's Empress would I deign to prove:
No! make me *mistress* to the man I love."

Julia withdrew her hand as if she had been stung by a viper. She had scarcely heeded the first sentence, but the force, the eloquence of the last line—the uncontrolled expression he gave to the word "mistress," startled her to attention. She arose instantly, and, without saying a word, was about to withdraw: he seized her arm and again urged her to be seated. "Nay, listen," he began, "my dearest Amelia: see what misery springs from marriage; look at your own friend Julia,"—She interrupted him instantly.

"Oh, they are happy, happy in the very bonds which bind them together! She has no wish ungratified; her heart is the repository of all his cares, of all his wants, of all his desires."

"Stop, stop," resumed Walsingham; "you are sadly deceived—sadly mistaken: she is as ignorant of the ruin which threatens her as the babe unborn. He dupes her by fine words and promises; he regards her as an ignorant creature, who has not courage to listen to that which would scare her from this metropolis. Does she know where she is at this moment?"

"Away, away, Mr. Walsingham! you cannot thus deceive me; you cannot, paint the ruin how you will, make me believe that he would be unmarried to-morrow, or that Julia could harbour one thought against the man she loves,—the man to whom she clings for succour and support; and how dare you, sir, to think that I would sacrifice my virtue to you?"

"In the eye of Heaven," he coolly answered, "we should be married."

"And why not, then," replied Julia, "in the eye of society? What! would you wish to bring the girl who loved you to be a by-word and a scorn—to be an outcast from the world,—to tremble when the eye of virtue recognised her as the low, degraded, scorned, helpless woman, she then would be? And, Mr. Walsingham, since you have selected your quotations from a poem our sex is almost forbidden to read, allow me to offer you this, from a more virtuous writer, and addressed to a monarch. 'A woman,' says Lord Clarendon, 'who prostitutes herself to a king, is equally infamous to all women of honour, and must expect the same contempt from them as if she were common to mankind; and that no enemy he (Charles II.) had, could advise him a more sure way to lose the hearts and affections of the people than the indulging himself in such licentiousness.' Now answer me, sir, how dare you insult me as you have done; and your reason why, when you own your love, you refuse to marry me."

"On account of my father, dearest Amelia. I told you of my difference with him on the score of marriage; and I feared and still fear his discovery if I should marry. I had the intention of fulfilling a promise of marriage at his death, but, since I find you so adverse to my proposition, I am ready to be married in secret, and here offer my hand. I do not wish," continued the scoundrel, "to shock your modesty; it was offered in a moment of haste and eagerness, and you will forgive the words of which a man so passionately in love as I am may unintentionally avail himself. It is the dread that my father may in his anger cut me off with a shilling, and leave me nothing but what the law enforces him to do, that prompts this; as the estate without some other assistance would be a weight more calculated to sink me, than to make me free to ramble at discretion. Again, Amelia, let me implore you to think kindly of me, and allow that I have had some reason in my madness."

"Tell me, Mr. Walsingham," replied Julia, "what makes you think that Julia and her husband are unhappy, and that he deceives her? for I should have said from my own observation that no two people seemed fonder of each other—that little link of affection, the boy, keeping the chain firmer and closer together."

"You ladies, dear Amelia," he replied, although blessed with eyes which might deaden the rays of the sun, see occasionally very indistinctly. Julia regards him with the look of affection, and she does not see the worm which is devouring him: his

love is a very secondary affair with him,—his whole thought,—his whole absorbing idea—mind, I trust it to you as a secret—is *gaming*."

"Gaming!" replied Julia, trembling in every limb, "gaming! why, Mr. Walsingham, if such be the case, where does he gratify his wish?"

"*Here*," said Walsingham, "here in *this* house."

"In this house!" continued Julia; "why, this house you told me was hired for the night in order to give this masquerade, which you further remarked was a liberal act in the strangers now resident in Paris."

"I did, I believe, dearest Amelia, say something to that amount; but in all French societies *like this*, there are gaming tables, and he will be there, I dare say, losing thousands. I have warned him against it; but he is dead to all counsel, all advice."

"Let us return and keep close to him," replied Julia in a trepidation, which again might have betrayed her.

"No, no, my angel, let us profit by this moment to enjoy each other's conversation; before long every corner of the house will be crammed; but tell me, Amelia, answer me sincerely, for none can know the value of the answer but he who feels as I do. Your love, my own sweet girl, confess it mine, and I am satisfied; nay, *say* so—do not nod your head, or look so downcast, as if you were ashamed of confessing what I have a right to ask."

"Mr. Walsingham, surely you do not desire me to say what you must have known."

"Nay, Amelia," he continued, (again warming,) "you must say the word."

"Then (oh! heavens, do not think the worse of me for my candid avowal!) I *do* love you."

"She shall be mine yet," said Walsingham to himself; and then turning towards her, said, "Thank you, thank you, dearest Amelia; my future conduct shall convince you how sincerely I love you. And now let me exhort you to listen to my proposition relative to the secret marriage."

"Oh, spare me now," replied the eager Julia; "do, pray, Mr. Walsingham, return to Robert; they will think it so odd, our long absence. Come, sir, *I* insist,—as *yet I* am to be obliged." So saying, she rose from her seat, and her obsequious lover, willing perhaps to coax Robert into a little play in order to keep up the excitement, yet determined not to allow

him to sacrifice much, he well knew that private play would suit him best, rose from his seat, and drawing the hand of Julia through his arm, he patted it affectionately, saying, "How long, I wonder, will you keep me from all the joys I must experience when this small hand is mine!"

She merely responded with an intimation to keep such conversation for less crowded rooms; and then pushing their way through a set of opera-dancers who had congregated together, and by means of elbowing some solemn Turk, or jostling some Franciscan friar, they reached the sofa at the conclusion of the conversation mentioned before, Robert merely advising Amelia to be cautious. At the meeting both stood up; Robert turned Walsingham away to whisper his intentions, during which time Amelia proposed that she should have the jessamine blossom; but before this could be done the gentlemen again turned round. Julia was in the middle of whispering that she had accepted Walsingham, and began to speak of the secret marriage; so far, therefore, Amelia was informed of her destiny, and now she was willing to hear the repetition. Forgetting that she had not the flower, she said in an artificial voice, "Come, Mr. Walsingham, it is now my turn to dance with you; I have no idea, indeed, of my pretty friend occupying all your time:" and she took Walsingham's arm and walked in the very room in which Julia had been seated. The sofa was unoccupied, and they soon took possession. Before their conversation is related, the reader will bear in mind that Julia having once secured her husband, was determined not to let him out of her sight. She, therefore, kept him in conversation relative to the dancers; and as no mistake could occur between them, Robert knowing her to be his wife, the remarks were either listened to without being answered, or answered when it was evident they had not been heard.

"I am afraid, Mrs. Douglass, that this scene of idle amusement can hardly gratify *you*," said Walsingham (he being determined to be a most frigid exemplary young gentleman); "and if it were not to satisfy the bursting curiosity of your lively friend, Miss Stanhope, I should have preferred the pleasure of your quiet sociable evenings to this horrid exhibition of half-naked females. I really feel inclined to place the advice of the French philosopher upon a board and walk about as if I was one of the bill-stickers of Paris."

"And what may that be?" said Amelia, whose ravished ears stretched with excitement. She was sitting, be it remembered,

by her avowed lover, her future husband, and now was to from her idea of him from the conversation addressed to an apparently indifferent person.

"He well remarks," continued Walsingham, "'Si les femmes sentaient leurs intérêts, elles sauraient combien la modestie, la décence les embellit, et, au contraire, combien la hardiesse et l'affectation des airs les enlaidit, et dégoûte les hommes de leur commerce.'"

"It is very true, no doubt," replied Amelia; "but it is neither the fashion to wear high dresses, nor is it very consistent with youth to be as grave as a judge, or as pensive as a poet."

"True, Mrs. Douglass, replied Walsingham; "nor is it quite so easy to come up to the standard of his excellence. He remarks, 'Il faut qu'une jeune fille soit simple et modeste dans sa parure, égale, douce, honnête, et d'une humeur complaisante; avec de l'esprit, et de la raison." But you, Mrs. Douglass, realise the beauty such a desirable combination might form."

"Thank you, Mr. Walsingham; and in which of these is my companion, Amelia, deficient?"

"Perhaps in no one," continued he; "but there is a careles levity about her which is excusable in youth, and yet which Mrs. Douglass at nearly the same age has learnt to discard. She is deficient in that excellent consistency of conduct which is so remarkable in yourself: for instance, she would enjoy any badinage of conversation better than that which tends to instruct as well as to amuse."

Amelia bit her lip until it nearly bled; and she inwardly thanked the mask which concealed the glow of anger she could not control.

"But come, Mr. Walsingham, surely you admire the beauty, the grace, the raven hair, the light, the graceful step of Amelia. She is so natural in her manner, so much above art, and has so much more *elasticity* in her walk than I have: besides, her eyes dark as jet—"

"Stop, stop, Mrs. Douglass; in her personal beauty it must indeed be a fastidious man to discover a fault." (Amelia glowed with delight.) "No, no; I doubt if he of Sicily who painted the famous Venus could have selected a fairer form or lovelier face. It is true her nose is a little retroussé, and her ears are not over round: but I look to the mind; I would have her pursue literature as a study as well as a pleasure: I would have her emulate you, Mrs. Douglass, in the employment of

time, and in domestic enjoyment. 'Le bonheur domestique est à la longue le plus solide, et le plus doux.'"

"Well, I dare say," replied Amelia, not a little piqued, "she will profit by your advice and your example; but take care you do not make her a blue-belle, who, when you ask her about some of the occurrences of life, stops your domestic felicity by asking in what year the Argonautic expedition sailed."

"I fear she is not much inclined to listen to me; although I once thought that I, who loved her with a purity of love seldom witnessed, who looked forward to a marriage with her as a step leading to a reconciliation with my father,—for when I am married, I think his anger will change to delight,—might have gained her esteem, if not her affections. You will forgive me, Mrs. Douglass, mentioning this to you in such a place; but your mask saves the embarrassment, and we speak as if we were in the dark, with only virtue and honour for our guides."

CHAPTER V.

A WEEK had elapsed since Charles Stanhope had paid the visit of condolence and charity to old Jenkins, and he now meditated another trip. The weather had been wet, cold, and raw, and notwithstanding our strange mode of passing the summers in cities, and winters amongst leafless trees, damp lawns, boggy lanes, cheerless fields, short days and dark nights, Stanhope had contrived, in spite of the frigid indifference and lazy habits of his wife, to spend his time profitably ; but scarcely an hour had passed without his wishing again to see the poor old unfortunate man. He felt, however, satisfied that he had left him a sufficient sum to enable him to surmount the difficulties of his situation,—to buy the wherewithal to cover his children, and replenish the almost exhausted draw which contained the hemp, which alone constituted the occupation of his dame. The sun was visible, for a wonder,—the murkiness, the fog of the morning had been dissipated, and Stanhope, resolving not to allow another day to pass without fulfilling his charitable intention, mentioned the subject thus :

" Margaret, my love ! I have ordered the horses ; we *must*" (and he laid a stress upon the word, which was sufficient to show he apprehended a slight opposition) " ride over to poor old Jenkins and see his daughter."

" Indeed," replied this drone, " I cannot go to-day. I feel more inclined to remain at home : it is so much trouble to get dressed, and the ride is long ; and no amusement when we have tired ourselves for nothing."

" Nothing !" exclaimed Charles ; " is it nothing to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry,—to comfort those in distress, and alleviate the misfortunes of our neighbours ? Is it nothing, to extend our charity to those in want—to hear the prayers of the old, and to see the smiles of the young, praying for our prosperity, and blessing our benevolence ? Come, come, Margaret, you must shake off this general lassitude of yours. I know your heart is good ; but, I am afraid," he added, with a smile, for

Margaret appeared moved at his earnestness, "your liver is bad. Come, military obedience, madam: your servant awaits *your* orders,—the horses will be here in a quarter of an hour; so away, and remember this: 'Despatch is the soul of business.'"

Margaret moved, it was true, but not in double-quick time; she left her work, if sticking a few threads of worsted into a piece of canvass can be called *work*, upon the table: half a score of penny skeins were scattered about the room, and the whole wore that uncomfortable appearance which the best of apartments would exhibit when a lazy woman nominally governs the establishment, and the duty of the superior is neglected, and the inferiors avail themselves of the same inattention. Charles looked round the room when his wife had quitted it; and he sighed—he sighed, poor man, when he thought how little energy was required to make a house comfortable, and how eagerly the bad example of the mistress was followed in the maid.

The horses came, and after waiting about an hour for his wife, Charles placed her in the saddle, and they started off, taking the well-known road to the cottage. They rode in silence, for Charles's mind was too much occupied with the scene of wo he knew he must face; and Margaret pouted her pretty lips, and was moody—nay, if a woman is ever so, sulky. They arrived at the cottage, but a far different scene awaited them. A certain degree of comfort was visible; the floor was nicely sanded, the fagot sparkled and crackled on the hearth, some plates and dishes stood in regular lines clean and in good order. A girl about fifteen was occupied in arranging the different furniture: but, before the fire, and in the same chair, was the crazy woman,—she was turning the wheel and pinching the hemp; and when Charles stood before her, he was almost petrified at the cold insensible eye which was fixed for a moment upon him. She turned away after giving a kind of maniac smile, singing,

"'Oh, where shall I my true love find?'"

"Little girl?" said Charles; "where is old Jenkins?"

"He's working in the garden, sir. Shall I call him?"

"Do so, my pretty little creature;" and she departed on her errand, thinking Charles the handsomest man she had ever seen. Jenkins soon returned; his face convinced Charles that a great change had taken place for the better; and in his warmth and anxiety he at once desired the old man to say what friendly hand had been extended toward him.

Jenkins, after the first salutation, pointed to heaven and said, "It is there, sir,—there; *He* has been pleased to smile upon us. My daughter Susan is recovered so much, that she comes home to-day; and my boy, sir,—my poor sailor boy,—is gone to fetch her. Oh, sir, he is such a man!—he is like 'em all, brave, generous, and forgiving. Dear heart! how you would have startled to see him, who has been before death these last six years, a-crying like a child when he heard his mother singing that song about Susan. I feel so lightsome like, I feel quite young again. And see, sir, how my other child has put us all to rights: and dame, sir, she is so much recovered, that every now and then she knows us all; and we sits down, and, 'Dame,' says I, 'which is your son?' and she points to John—then I says, and I always shiver like when I asks her, 'Dame, which is your old man?' and she knows me, sir, thank God that she does, bless her old heart!" And the poor fellow passed the sleeve of his jacket across his eyes.

Stanhope turned to Margaret, and took her hand. She looked quite unconcerned; but when Stanhope proposed for them to go home, the natural curiosity of the woman overcame her habitual coolness, and she expressed a wish to remain to see Susan, and likewise,—not that she mentioned this,—to see the sailor. Stanhope entered into the feelings of the old man, and his generous heart warmed at the prospect of brighter days for the honest, hard-working father.

"Well, Jenkins," he began, "let us hope that the worst is past, and that now all will be right. I have got a nice cottage for you, and when I go abroad, I shall beg you to go occasionally and look after my little garden. But has any medical man told you to bring your daughter back? because it sometimes happens that it makes people in your wife's state rather worse than better."

"Oh, yes, sir, thank you, the doctor as lives in the village said he thought it would do dame good, and that it would assist in the recovery of the girl, if she was made comfortable at home. So, sir, we are all about our different businesses now; we are going to put up a bed in that corner, and we got a screen like, and we shall be together again."

"But I wanted you, Jenkins, to move over at once to Giles Cottage, close to my gate; it has been put in order for you, every thing is clean and nice, and you will have more room and a better garden."

"I think, Jenkins," said Margaret, "you had better do that, and take advantage of this fine day."

"Lord love your pretty face, ma'am! I did not dare speak to you; but now I hear the voice of kindness from such a lady, I do think that I could live twenty years more to pray for your happiness—bless you, ma'am, bless you!"—and at that moment the old woman was loquacious, and said, "Bless you!"

Jenkins went to the door, and he clapped his old hands together, fixing his fingers in an attitude of prayer, and exclaimed, "Here they come, my own boy and his darling sister! I am glad you are here, sir, for I think it will stop my daughter from being too much overpowered like, because she won't be quite so much herself, as I might say, when she sees your pretty lady; and if we can only get her used to dame for five or six minutes, perhaps she may not cry so much, for she has a good heart; and she has sorrowed much for her crime."

Margaret looked out, and at some distance she saw the sailor leading his sister. He had taken her by the hand, and was, to use a sailor's expression, towing her against wind and tide; for as they neared the cottage Susan became more reluctant to advance, and her brother was actually dragging her along. At last, on perceiving the horses, they both stopped. Margaret mentioned this to old Jenkins, who forthwith despatched the little girl, desiring them to come home, and that the gentleman and lady were those who had assisted them so much. Whereupon, after a little conversation, in which the sailor's arms were flying about as if they did not belong to him, he took hold of Susan's arm, and they advanced. Susan then looked about nineteen; she was of moderate height, possessing a beautiful figure, with lively black eyes, rather a sharp yet pretty countenance, and a profusion of dark hair, which she wore in ringlets. Her dress was that of a neat country girl; and it was evident that her shoes had been selected with care, and that the shawl which partially concealed her pretty form had been one of those many gifts which had led to her ruin. So true it is, that in the lower ranks of life the *means* of gratifying vanity may be withstood; but the actual dress itself, the decorated bonnet or the handsome shawl, are fatal. She wore a common cottage bonnet, and her countenance, although pale and betraying sorrow, was that of a very pretty young woman.

The sailor approached with the unsteady step of a seaman. He was about sixteen—a fine-grown lad of his age. His dark hair came in great profusion over the sides of his face, which

his small hat was unable to conceal. He was dressed in a blue round jacket, a Guernsey striped frock, trousers fitting tight round the hips, and large enough in the legs to accommodate a Jamaica-man with the elephantiasis; then came the long quartered shoes, and enough string to measure the Irish giant.

When Susan came near to Margaret, and she saw the cold scrutinising look, the kind of indifferent curiosity with which she surveyed her, the girl's face became as red as scarlet, and she hesitated about crossing the threshold. Old Jenkins stepped forward and welcomed her. She threw herself into his arms, and continued crying and hiding her face against the old man's shoulders. She would not untwine her arms; and she kept saying, "Father! father!" Not another word came from her. And although the scene and the bustle in the cottage might have warmed the old dame, had she been even as sensible as affection had believed, yet she sat quite unconcerned; the wheel continued its rotatory motion, and the eyes were only directed to the work before her.

Stanhope, by way of relieving Susan from her difficulty, had commenced a conversation with the sailor-boy, to which Margaret, who admired his straightforward yet respectful mode of address, joined in questioning the lad; and he, sailor like, for sailors are very fond of pretty faces, invariably answered the question of Charles to Margaret, holding his hat with both his hands, and twisting it round about, first one way and then the other, as if he were willing to make it as flat in the rim as a skimming-dish.

"How long have you been at sea, my lad?" said Charles in his usual good-tempered manner.

"Six years," replied the boy, looking full in Margaret's face.

"Six years!" replied Margaret. "Why, how came you to go away so young, John?"

"I'll tell you, ma'am, all about it in the twirling of a handspike. I was one evening going into the village, when I met two young lads just about my age now. They asked me the way to a public-house, and I showed them the Plough. I was then going away; but one of the two said, 'No, d——n it, shipmate,' (I begs your pardon, ma'am, but those were his words,) 'you sha'n't go without having pilotage, so bring yourself to anchor; and as we are not six upon four now, you may sway away at the provision basket.' Well, ma'am, we got talking about one thing and the other, when one says to me, 'Why,

what a gulpin you must be to stick at anchor in this muddy roadstead,' (to be sure it was a wet day,) 'when you might see the world and know what it's made of! Why don't you cut and run, bundle down chest and bag, and ship on board one of the outward-bound as a cabin-boy? I warrant, a sharp fellow like you would not be long handling the skipper's tea-kettle; you would soon be one of your light hands aloft, and then, d'ye see, you'd be independent—you'd be in America one day sailing alongside of the sea-serpent, which nobody but those Yankees ever saw yet; and the next you'd be sipping rum at Jamaica: then you'd be amongst the *black niggers* in Africa, and seeing them in their birthday suits;' (I beg your pardon, ma'am, but they never wears no clothes;) 'and then, after that, you might be picking up gold-dust on the Gold Coast;' (I thought the whole land was gold;) 'and, Lord love you, my lad! only to go up the Straits and see all the fun and frolic of the different places!—one day to be eating a shark, and the next one to be frying a flying-fish;' (I shook my head at that, ma'am—*flying*-fish;) 'No go,' said I. 'Ay, but it is,' said he: 'just you ship yourself along with us; we are going to the Eastern Indies, and so up to China; and there, my lad, I'll show you men with two tails, like monkeys, only lashed higher up. Come, fill your glass, my little sailor, and I'll sing you a song,'—and they sang me half a dozen. Well, sir, I was so pleased, that I made up my mind for a start; and I promised to meet them that day week. One of them gave me a book of songs, and I learnt to sing one or two, to make the children dance, and mother there used to repeat them. So, when the day comes, I just runs and takes a kiss at she,' (pointing to Susan,) 'for she was my favourite; and I stows away some money, and some traps, and swinging them tied up in a handkerchief to the end of a stick, away I went with a flowing sheet after my companions. I never said a word to father or mother. So, after six years, home I comes, and finds the old ones all alive, having escaped a fire-ship: though to be sure the old house was burnt: but that does not signify—I had got some of the shiners, and 'Here,' says I, as I kissed my father, 'here's the stuff to build houses with;' and I hands over enough for him to sway away upon all top-ropes for the next five years, by which time I'm thinking he'll have to answer Master aloft."

They were stopped in the recital of the young sailor by Susan's loud scream of "Mother!" and instantly the eyes of Stanhope and the sailor were fixed upon the horrid scene. Before

the old woman, Susan had thrown herself upon her knees, and had begun in a low tone, so as to escape the ears of the other party, to call upon her mother. The old man stood by the side of his wife, and had shaken her gently by the shoulder, as if to rouse her from her torpor: the old woman still held the hemp, but the daughter had removed the wheel on one side. Her endeavours to arouse the sleepy forgetfulness of her mother into a recognition led to the increased violence of voice. It was useless: a total oblivion seemed to have at last come over the dame; which the daughter mistook for a disinclination to pardon, or totally forgive her. "Mother, mother," she said, "look at me,—it is your Susan—your daughter!" and she burst into a dreadful flood of tears, but they ceased instantly when a thought struck the girl that her mother was an idiot; she approached upon her knees close to her—her eyes were starting from her head—she looked, she gazed intently upon her parent, but not the slightest sign of recognition occurred, although Jenkins leaned over her shoulder, and said in a mild soothing voice, "Dame, dame, 'tis your daughter," she heard not—she heeded not. Susan had now placed her finger upon the eyelids of her mother, and she held the eyes open, looking into them with an expression of horror which none can paint; she again called her louder and louder; when, placing both her hands over her own eyes, she gave a tremendous shriek, and fell backward.

Stanhope, overwhelmed with the bitterness of the scene, could hardly succour her; but her brother ran to lift her up, whilst old Jenkins tottered to the table and supported himself against it. Again returning sense came to the daughter—she looked again upon the vacant, cold, idiotic stare of the mother, whose stony sight were better likened to that of a ghost than of the living; there was "no speculation in those eyes, with which she did glare withal"—not a noise was heard—even those who had been accused of unnatural coldness held their breath. Susan once more knelt before her who gave her birth; she seemed in prayer, for her lips moved, although no sound escaped; she grew nearer and nearer, as if to win her by kind and affectionate mildness; she called her again and again,—'twas useless—no sound responded, no animation came back, as if to recall memory—none! but, unfortunately, the dame shook her head with that motion which implies a negative. The idea whirled through the brain of Susan; she merely said, "Do—oh do!" but again the same motion occurred. Susan looked hurriedly

around her; she fixed her eyes upon her father and her brother —she again looked an eager solicitation from her mother; then jumping on her feet, she ran to the door, and was soon beyond the threshold. Her brother followed her, and brought her back; but, as she entered the hut, an empty phial fell from her hand. Stanhope instantly seized one of the broken pieces, and smelt it;—it was arsenic. Immediately he proposed to pour warm water down the wretched creature's throat. Whilst sense remained, she would have opposed it; for on hearing the proposition, she threw herself on the bed, hiding her mouth in the pillow. There was no water warm—there was no remedy within their reach; and as if spell-bound to the place, they awaited the termination of this horrid tragedy. Shortly Susan became convulsed; she spoke of the icy coldness which seemed creeping through every vein, and then of floods of fire coursing through her blood; once she raised herself up, and her brother, whose eyes were swollen in tears, in vain feebly articulated, "Cheer up—cheer up!"

The deadly venom had secured the prey; a kind of maniac look soon flushed her eyes; she called loudly on her mother and on her father;—the one was an idiot, the other struck dumb by the appalling scene. She accused herself of all this horror; and, oh, too deeply—indelibly—engraven on her mind even for the pangs of death to eradicate, she called upon her seducer—she implored Heaven to grant him days of happiness and nights of ease, and she died exclaiming with outstretched arms, as if to clutch her lover closer to her breast, "My *Cavendish*—my *Cavendish!!*"

This is no fiction of poetic imagination—this dreadful and appalling scene is drawn from the life, and happened within these realms, within the last two years;—and if we could benefit from the examples of the wretched, here, *here* is the scene to awake our slumbering virtue, to recall us from the paths of wickedness, and to make us judge "of the enormity of the crime by the mischief it produces." There lay upon the bed, once the pride of the parents, whose youth and beauty might have secured wealth and happiness, the dead, cold corpse of Susan—and across it, the anguish-stricken sailor. By the side of the table, with his face buried in his hands, was poor old Jenkins; the dame had resumed her work; and Stanhope, whose tears could not be controlled, led his wife—and she too weeping—to the door. At the very moment, the younger sisters came in, to kiss their returned friend; and as they called her name in childish happiness, the dame broke into her song of,

"Susan, Susan, lovely dear—"

"Where the tree falleth, there it must lie," were the only words which escaped from Stanhope. He lifted his wife upon the horse; they both, as if eager to withdraw from them on whom the hand of Providence had so heavily fallen, started into a brisk gallop, and felt their hearts lighter as they increased their distance from the wretched.

No sooner did Stanhope arrive at home, than he despatched a messenger to the clergyman, informing him of what he had witnessed; he sent a cart to remove the furniture, and by the able assistance of the sailor, who now found weeping unavailing turned his attention to his parents, the furniture and the living were removed to the new cottage, and the suicide given over to the charge of those who

"Live upon the dead,
And mimic sorrow when the heart's not sad."

That Stanhope should inquire about this Cavendish was natural; the name recalled scenes he would willingly have for ever struck from his heart. He had forgiven his sister, and he had heard, with much satisfaction, that she had made an excellent mother and an affectionate wife: but now, a life sacrificed through the arts of this villain aroused his activity, and although he reasoned,—and, some think, reasoned rightly—that in all affairs of this kind the woman is more to blame than the man, and that if the female sex rejected with becoming scorn the first advances of those who, they know, can never render them respectable, the misery would rarely occur. He inquired far and near, and soon determined that it was the same Cavendish; for the time corresponded with his being in England, and the description of the person was the same as that which he had gleaned from Louisa. One man informed him that he would know him any where, by a cut across his wrist, which he remarked when the gentleman was playing cricket; and the sailor said he should know him again in spite of all attempts to disgrace his figure-head. All this amounted to very little—for the bird was flown, and no one had seen him for many months. From Susan little had been gleaned as to where Cavendish had taken her, but she spoke of Dover as if she had been there; but whenever her father had asked her concerning the man who had taken her away, she grew reserved and cried: and old Jenkins added, that he never knew the name of the man

who had seduced his daughter until it came to his ear wafted in her last breath.

Stanhope endeavoured to wean the sailor from his profession, and after various waverings from a resolution never to abandon the sea, the young sailor, being the only one who knew Cavendish by sight of the whole family, consented to become the servant of Stanhope; and as old Jenkins's cottage was near his master's house, he felt less remorse at leaving his roof. He was shortly afterwards elevated to the dignity of valet-de-place, and was in constant attendance upon Stanhope.

It was about a week after this, that Stanhope received a letter from Douglass; and the contents determined him as to his immediate application for leave. Margaret little participated in his eagerness, although she could not refuse her consent. The letter was written in apparently low spirits; at least not containing that kind of life-like animation which before had been observable in the correspondence of Douglass. But one part—and that which referred to Amelia, and her evident attachment to the son of Sir William Walsingham of Oakside, and moreover the certainty that this was mutual—determined Stanhope to visit Paris as speedily as possible. He ran his eye over the Red Book, and there saw that the town residence of the baronet was in Cavendish-Square; and he quietly muttered a malediction against the baronet for living in a place which bore the name of a villain.

The leave was granted, the idleness of Margaret a little removed by the bustle, and four days after the receipt of the letter, and without answering it, Stanhope, brimfull of hope at the good alliance his sister was about to form, was on his journey to town. He alighted at the Arlington Hotel, and told his wife, who seemed quite indifferent even in the bustle of London, that he intended to remain two days, and then proceed to Dover; giving as his reason the wish to see Louisa, and likewise to obtain an introduction to Sir William Walsingham. He wrote a note to the former, mentioning his arrival and intention of dining with her that day at seven o'clock, and leaving Margaret only the trouble of changing her dress, he sallied forth to Cavendish-Square.

The house was closed—as a sailor would say, the dead lights were in—there were no signs of habitation—no dozing old woman, as Mr. Haynes Bayly says,

"To peep through the dining-room blinds."

He rapped and rung, and after waiting about a quarter of an hour, during which time he repeated the manual exercise, and went through every rap, from the postman's to the five minutes' tirade of a fashionable footman, an elderly woman muffled up as if fearful of facing a breath of air, just opened enough of the door to see the stranger; when, perceiving he was a gentleman, she undid the sliding chain, which for prudence' sake she had kept on, and allowed Stanhope to enter the hall.

"My good woman," said Stanhope, "is Sir William Walsingham in town?"

"The good woman evidently neither liked the freedom nor the question—firstly, because she called herself a lady; and secondly, because the question required an answer, and her short cough was harassing enough, without talking to increase it: so, by way of not provoking the one, and of getting rid of the other, she replied, "No."

"No?" repeated Stanhope, rather astonished at the abrupt negative, without the general appendage of "Sir;" "pray where is he gone?"

"France," replied the old lady; and this produced a cough, and she looked as much as to say, "That's quite enough for you:" but she was mistaken.

"When did he go?" continued Stanhope.

"Yesterday," replied the woman; and another cough followed.

"Is he going to make any stay there?" asked Stanhope.

"Don't know," was responded.

"How's his son?" continued the inquisitive interrogator.

"Well," was the answer.

"Where is his son, my good woman!"

"France;" and during a fit of coughing which Stanhope thought might introduce him to a coroner's inquest, he departed, being quite satisfied it was all right, and ready to pour the tide of welcome news into the ears of Louisa.

As usual, although Margaret had never stirred out and had nothing in the world to do, she was not ready. She had seated herself at the window, and had seen one man run over by an omnibus without a start, and had seen a boxing-match without either withdrawing or being excited: she seemed quite overcome by the thick atmosphere of London, and was as torpid as a boa-constrictor after a feast. They managed, therefore, not to arrive until half-past seven; and Stanhope mistook the demure look, the rather distant manner, the taciturn behaviour, to having kept the stock-broker and general speculator from his dinner. Margaret, however,

rather liked this silence, as she was too lazy to speak, and cared very little about Louisa, her husband or her baby. The last poor dear little creature had been dressed up, with very religious care, in all the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, in order to excite a little envy in Stanhope, he being childless: and it is not unfrequent that these little sisterly kindnesses may be observed.

"Well, Louisa," said Stanhope, "here I am on my way to Paris. I wish I could persuade you to come and make one of a lively party: you seem moped to death here."

"Charles, you mistake," replied the evangelical sister: "I am here perfectly contented, enjoying the society of those Christians who do not spend their time in rioting and wantoning, in living amongst heretics and blasphemers."

"Hallo!" said Charles, quite surprised at this volley: "at any rate, my dear Louisa, you seem to have parted company with your charity; for why the French should not be just as good as we are, I can't tell."

"Then I can," resumed his sister. "How do they spend their Sabbaths? Are not the shops open for worldly traffic? Do not the theatres—those places of iniquity, resound with unhallowed music? Are not balls and routs, and such like un-christian meetings and merriments, improper *of* the Lord's Day? And how, then, can a nation be collectively virtuous, which is individually wicked?"

"Pooh, pooh, my dear!" replied Stanhope; "it is just as well to amuse oneself innocently, as to sit still and talk scandal, or go to bed because Sunday is so insufferably dull."

"Innocently!" exclaimed Louisa despondingly: "as if amusement could be innocent *of* a Sunday."

"Some methodistical fellow has turned your brain, my dear, or you are wilfully blind. Why, in this country, where you would force a man to keep the day as you think right, you see more drunken men and women rolling about the streets, than you would see in Paris in a week. Whereas, if you would cease to make people strait-laced by act of parliament, you would find that their innocent amusements would lead to sobriety and contentment."

"And what would become of their precious souls?" replied Louisa. "Oh, what would Mr. Cantall say, to hear my brother advocating a system in direct opposition to the Fourth Commandment?—he, who would even prohibit domestic servitude on that day; who dines on cold meat in order that his servants may not work, but go to chapel; and who is so correct

on this point, that his servant cleans his shoes on Saturday night, and not even is his bed made on the Sabbath."

"Then he is a dirty fellow," replied Charles, "for his pains. And as for this Mr. Cantall, who I take to be one of those long slim fellows with their hair plastered flat upon their heads, and their coats hanging dangling about their heels, I have this to say: Whenever a man talks of his honesty, keep your hands in your pockets, for he is going to rob you; and whenever a man boasts of his sanctity, it is merely a cloak for the multitude of his sins.—But come, let us leave this discourse. Your sister Amelia is, I believe, likely to be married to the eldest and only son of Sir William Walsingham, a man of large property, and certainly a most desirable connexion. My chief business in London was, after I had seen you and Walton, (who looks as grave as a sick monkey, and would warrant the suspicion that the stocks were falling, or the tracts too plentiful,) to proceed direct to Paris—not, as my pious sister would say, to riot and to wanton, but to do my duty towards Amelia,—to see her properly settled in life, and, if I can, to persuade Mr. Honor to cross with me, to give me his friendly aid, and likewise to arrange a settlement for young Houghton. If, therefore, you feel inclined to be present at your sister's wedding, I would advise you to pack up hastily, and do a proper piece of christianity in regard to her, and the unholy nation, whom of course you will endeavour to reclaim. I think Amelia would like upon such an occasion to be surrounded by her family; and a better time could never be chosen than when we are to increase it by a new brother."

Walton, who had never opened his lips, and who was sadly perplexed between religion and the Stock-exchange, at last broke his silence.

"I think, my dear," he began, addressing his wife, "we may proceed to Paris after the settling-day. I can carry over the further account; and on the more serious subject, I think there is no *option* when it becomes a duty. I am ready and willing to go, for I never have seen this modern Babylon; and I understand they always get the earliest information relative to Cortes Bonds."

Margaret managed by great exertion to get out to Louisa, "Oh, do come." The sedate and sober Louisa wavered much between the inclination and her duty, and before they had parted, it was arranged that the Waltons should follow; and Stanhope and his wife proceeded to Paris, and arrived there about midnight, at the Hôtel des Princes, on the night of the masquerade.

CHAPTER VI.

"Come, come, Mr. Walsingham," continued Amelia, still affecting the voice of Julia, "you must not quarrel with her about a trifle. You will find her more discreet, and perhaps steadier, than you expect; and Amelia has whispered to me your conversation this evening with her."

Walsingham started. "I had hoped," he said, "that she would have kept the secret."

"Then you do not know our sex quite so well as you imagine, Mr. Walsingham. The world, with its usual liberality, has declared a woman incapable of keeping a secret: you would not surely wish Amelia to disappoint the public?"

"No, no, certainly not," replied Walsingham, abstractedly; "but on my father's account."

"*Apropos de cela*," replied Amelia; "are you aware that Sir William Walsingham has arrived in Paris, and that it is announced in Galignani?"

"It cannot be," replied Walsingham hurriedly; "he would not venture into the city where I resided; but I will see the paper."

"You need not be in such a hurry to see that which will remain quietly enough. But to return to the point: in what manner, Mr. Walsingham, am I to consider the conversation which Amelia has mentioned to me? I beg of you to give me an explicit answer, as I shall of course relate it to Mr. Douglass."

"The devil!" muttered Walsingham; "caught in my own web, fixed beyond the power of retreating.—As a declaration of my sincere affection,—and I earnestly solicit you to forward my views,—I told her——"

"—Of the secret marriage, Mr. Walsingham; to which, I for one, will never consent. If your father is in Paris, the business can be arranged between Douglass and himself. Indeed, we expect my brother Stanhope."

"*Your* brother Stanhope! Why, you are not a Stanhope."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Walsingham," said Amelia, as she untied her mask; "but, *I* am Amelia."

"Amelia!!"

"Yes, Mr. Walsingham, *Amelia*—the lady with careless levity of youth—deficient in that excellent consistency of conduct—"

"Stop, for God's sake, Amelia!"

"—She who would enjoy any badinage of conversation, rather than—"

"For Heaven's sake, my dear girl!—"

"—She with the nose a little *retroussé*, and the ears not sufficiently round—"

"I do implore you, Miss Stanhope—"

"—The lady, to gratify whose bursting curiosity—"

"I'll hear no more," said Walsingham, rising from his seat; whilst Amelia very leisurely tied on her mask again, and said in the feigned voice, "Perhaps Mr. Walsingham would prefer the quiet domestic, sociable evenings, to the exhibition of half-naked females? I wonder, Mr. Walsingham, who brought us to this exhibition?"

"Answer me this question, Amelia; did I dance with you this evening?"

"In spite, Mr. Walsingham, of the light angelic tread, the raven hair, &c., you danced with Mrs. Douglass—"

"—And," interrupted Walsingham, "spoke to her on this sofa, mistaking her for you?"

"Yes, sir, and made me an offer of your hand; which she without my consent accepted for me, and but for the declaration you have just made of your sincere affection, and your request, that *I* might forward your views, I should have totally discountenanced."

Walsingham heard her not. His mind naturally reverted to the unfortunate conversation with Mrs. Douglass, in which he had discovered the whole levity of his conduct. He saw the cloud about to burst, and as a means of avoiding the deluge, he again seized Amelia's hand, and said, "I have only to repeat what I said to Mrs. Douglass, and to urge your acceptance of my hand. You must be aware of the sincerity of my affections, the honour of my intentions." But before he got an answer to his question, Mr. and Mrs. Douglass joined the party.

"We are come to be your guardians, young people," said Julia; "and we recommend you to take possession again, of our first sofa, now disengaged, and there watch the dancers."

"With all my heart, Mrs. Douglass," said Walsingham; for he was anxious to avoid an answer which, to avoid a greater evil, he had been obliged to provoke.

The party took up their situations again on the same sofa. The music was lively, the whole scene exhilarating—yet each of the four persons on that sofa were far from happy. The time was fast approaching for Douglass to put in force his desperate resolution. He felt how bitterly he had deceived his wife—he knew the secret was only in the keeping of a flighty girl;—he felt how completely he had compromised himself, his wife, and his sister-in-law.—Inwardly he made thousands of resolutions, which he knew himself too weak to carry into execution; and being now between remorse, shame, anger, and vexation, he might have found a quieter scene, and one more consonant with his wishes, than the giddy whirl of pleasure around him.—Neither was Julia without great alarm. She recalled all the sayings of Walsingham, and wondered most at that, "Does she know where she now is?" Then she foresaw but a melancholy termination of Amelia's happiness: Walsingham could not be sincere—and yet she had accepted him for her sister's husband. Amelia was nettled at the defect of her personal appearance; and Walsingham saw himself upon the brink of a precipice, down which he must inevitably roll, or forego the ruin of Douglass. Each person was fully employed in examining their own thoughts, and kept a strict silence. Their eyes perhaps fell upon the dancers, their ears perhaps caught the sound of the music; but they were indifferent to both, and perfectly confined to their own hopes and fears.

Douglass recovered first; the hour was come, and he was resolved to play. It was requisite to give Walsingham a hint that he was about to withdraw to change his mask, and in order so to do, he asked him if there was no room for refreshments—that he was thirsty. Walsingham understood the hint, and recommending the ladies to remain where they were, he conducted Douglass to a small room, where he soon turned his domino and put on a coloured mask.

"I urge you," said Walsingham, "to abandon your scheme. Rely upon it, you have chosen the worst night for the purpose you meditate: the rooms are on these evenings crowded, and women surround the table; you will be unable to make any calculation, from the eternal interruption you will experience; and independently of that, you have lost enough for one night."

"It is to regain it that I go," said Douglass, greatly excited. "Here is my only chance: with you, there is one eternal tide of good fortune against me."

"And here," interrupted Walsingham, "is one eternal pull in favour of the table. Besides, you cannot imagine what might be the consequences of your playing: that old fellow who spoke to you at dinner some time back is here; he will know you through any disguise, and he would not hesitate at any means to stop your ruin. It is discreditable, my dear Douglass, is this public play: gentlemen may amongst themselves risk a few hundreds, but public play is public vice. Be advised by me: change the domino again, and I will give you your revenge to-morrow at my rooms for any sum I may have been fortunate enough to win. I can only have your interest at heart; you know my affection for one of your family. Let me implore you to forego this determination, of which I foresee some mischief."

"You are a strange composition, Walsingham, and I cannot but thank you for your kindness. You are the man who introduced me here—you are the man who warned me of the impossibility of success without a steady perseverance; and, to tell you the truth, I think the old man was right when he said, that no man was worth plucking in public, who had undergone the ceremony in private. Go back to the women; keep them in conversation: I shall soon join you."

"That will be when your money is all gone:—until then, good night."

Douglass had put in his pocket no less a sum than fifty thousand francs: fifty notes contained the sum. He walked with a steady step to the rouge-et-noir, room, and believing in fortune more than in calculation, he commenced immediately and threw down a note of one thousand francs.

There is, generally speaking, on the night of the balls at the Salon, very little high play. There are a vast number of persons who hover round the table, and who play for five francs or a napoleon; but gamesters, excepting those flushed with wine, admire a perfectly silent room, where the attention is not distracted. The mention of the sum of money, which must be declared, turned the eyes of the bystanders towards the person who thus risked it. The old man was there; his eyes and his tongue were never idle.

"I wonder what fool that belongs to," he began quite near enough for Douglass to overhear.

"That man in the scarlet domino and mask," replied his friend.

"He ought to be whipped home to bed for a fool," continued

the old man. "Let us see how much he pays for his ball-ticket. There it goes—those croupiers will have it all!—another—another. Why, what a poor gamester he must be! three times it has run on the black, and he still continues to back the red."

Douglass began with a tide of ill luck. His plan seemed to be, to remain true to one colour; if he lost, to double; if he won, to continue his first stake: but he soon got irritable, and began to play carelessly.

"Ay," said the old man, "it only wanted that to complete it. Dash it down, my boy—you'll soon go home with empty pockets. And yet it sickens me to see these licensed plunderers walking off with the wealth of my countrymen: he is one, I'll be sworn, or he would never be so very foolish. I shall go to the dancers, and thus escape a little mortification."

On entering that room, the elderly gentleman found a vacant place on the sofa. Both Julia and Amelia had spread themselves out in order to retain the seat; but the stranger, who was unmasked, advanced, and, with that politeness for which he was celebrated, begged that he might be permitted to occupy the place until the guardians of such angels should return to claim it. The request was accorded; and the elderly gentleman, after stretching out his legs, and apparently endeavouring to make his hands reach as far as possible down his perambulators, sat back giving a heavy sigh. Even the ladies looked round, and their eyes twinkled through all the defences they had raised.

"It is not love, fair ladies," the old gentleman began, "which makes me sigh. I have sighed enough for that in youth; and when the time was passed for myself, I sighed for my daughter, who married a foreigner, and who soon removed her from any control of mine. I then sighed for my loss of money,—some of it was lost here. Now, I sigh for my foolish countryman in the next room, who is throwing away money by handfuls which would relieve hundreds in penury, and existing upon an excitement which will ruin his health and shake his nerves."

"In this house, did you say?" inquired Julia. "I thought we were here to dance, not to gamble."

"In the private houses in Paris," replied the old man, "there is always a little dash of écarté, to excite the most lazy; but here, playing is professional—the public gaming-house is of course supported by public gamesters; and all this music and lighting, this eating and drinking, will be paid for by the foolish

flies who keep tasting of that poisonous stuff which ultimately impoverishes the very blood."

"Does it follow," asked Julia, "that a public ball must nenessarily engender public gaming?"

"By no means, madam: but the Salon is a public gaming-house, which to attract more flies into the spider's web, offers a few luxuries near its meshes. No fowler spreads his snares with greater certainty than these licensed plunderers; but of all the fools I have ever seen, I have never seen a greater one than the tall Englishman in the next room."

Julia's suspicions had been before excited: she now thought her husband had been absent a long time; she became fretful and impatient, and yet afraid to leave her place, to be seen near a gaming-table. Amelia was well aware of the sudden shock she would experience if the truth was suddenly told her, and she whispered in her ear the propriety of withdrawing from a place which seemed to be rather questionable. To this there was no objection on the part of Julia, but she did not like to move without her husband, and at this moment a mask and domino passed near them. "Surely," said Amelia aloud, "that is Mr. Walsingham. How very strange that he should walk there, and forget his duty to us!"

"Walsingham!" said the old man; "surely you cannot be of his party! There are few men I would not rather hear mentioned by ladies than that *fellow*. You stare, madam, even through your green gauze; but I seldom withdraw an expression, as, I hope, I never use a harsh word unguardedly."

"And what objection, sir," said Amelia, bristling up, "can you find to Mr. Walsingham?"

"He never injured me," replied the old gentleman coolly; "because, I was a little too old for him: but I never yet knew the *friend*—do you mark me, madam—the friend of Mr. Walsingham, who ever escaped unscathed, or who was not lightened of his purse and ruined in his reputation. And who knows if his name is Walsingham!"

"I do," replied Amelia: "he is the son of Sir William Walsingham."

"The son of Old Nick himself, more probably," interrupted the stranger. "I tell you, I have known him under different names; and the last one he assumed was—"

"Oh, Mr. Walsingham," said Julia, as he approached, "I am glad you are come. Where is Mr. Douglass?"

"Douglass!" interrupted the old gentleman; "that is him.

I'll save him, in spite of himself." Then, turning to Walsingham, he said: "I wonder you so far forget your old habits, as to bring your friend to the Salon des Etrangers, when you might have been more useful to him at home."

"May I ask," said Walsingham, "the meaning of this sneering insult, and what right you have to interfere in our occupation of time?"

"Take care, young man, how you speak, or I shall advert to former times. The hectoring vapour of a ruined man—ruined in reputation for ever—is not likely to shake my intention. The mask you wear can hardly cover the blush of shame which has coloured your ears. I will send your husband to you, madam: he has a coloured mask and domino."

"No, no," said Julia, aloud, "thank God, then, it is not him, and I breathe again."

"Sit still, madam, I implore you," said Walsingham. "This gentleman labours under a great mistake—in short, he is famous for his errors and his imprudence."

"Silence, sir!" replied the stranger; "I have never been so imprudent or so covered with errors as to hide myself, or shelter myself under a name that did not belong to me. If this gentleman is the one by whose robbery you roll in a carriage, I recommend you to get your passport *visé'd* before ten o'clock to-morrow." Saying this, he withdrew.

"What can he mean, Mr. Walsingham?" asked Amelia.

"Poor fellow!" replied Walsingham, "he is mad,—has long suffered under a certain aberration of intellect, which generally overpowers the little reason he ever possessed when he is near music. He ruined himself at play, and now has taken up the other extreme. Sit still, Mrs. Douglass, for a moment, and your husband, who is in the refreshment-room, will return."

"We can go there and meet him," said Julia, hastily: "I feel very unwell, and I should like to go home."

"Then I will go and order the carriage. By the time it is at the door, Mr. Douglass will be ready also. If you move, you will lose your seats; and you may yet have to remain a quarter of an hour."

"I cannot remain quiet," said Julia; "there was something in the expression of that stranger which has frightened me. Did he not say we were in a public gaming-house, and named one who stands exactly opposite to our hotel? How can this be, when we drove for a quarter of an hour before we arrived?"

"Poor old fellow!" said Walsingham; "his senses are all abroad."

Here there was a confused noise heard, which came from the gaming-room; and a partial rush was made by all the people who heard it, to gain admission. Neither could Julia's ears deceive her, for her husband's voice was plainly audible. Disregarding the advice of Walsingham, she hastily arose, seized the arm of Amelia, and casting aside all those little civilities by which some succeed in passing through a crowd without elbowing a lane, she pushed her way into the room, and, in spite of the pressure around her, succeeded in gaining a position nearly opposite her husband. There she saw a man in a coloured domino and coloured mask, under the greatest excitement, and by his side the elderly stranger. Whatever might have occasioned the confusion, all was over now, and the parties who had rushed in like a torrent, released, now began to rush back again. Julia alone remained, like a statue linked to the arm of a living being. Her eyes were fixed upon the coloured mask, and her ears seemed standing out from her head, like those so beautifully, so correctly figured in the listening slave. She tried to catch a word; the croupiers were busy arranging the four or five packs of cards for the forthcoming deal, and not even the words of the elderly stranger, who seemed imploring the tall man not to continue playing, could reach her ears. The cards having been duly shuffled by all the croupiers, were at last arranged by the dealer, who placing a blue card in between the pack, offered them to the tall gentleman to cut; it being almost an invariable practice to allow the man playing the highest stake to cut the cards. The stranger did it; and on the croupiers calling out to make the game, he threw down two notes on the black. He was asked if they were to the same amount as the last, and he nodded his head.

It was a moment of the greatest suspense. Julia's look had never been turned from the tall man—her mouth was partially open, and the quiver of her lip alone bore evidence to her terrible anxiety. Amelia perhaps felt a compression of the hand or a tremulous motion of the arm, but she never spoke, and apparently did not breathe. Amelia, who knew well in what house she was, kept her eye on the dealer of the cards, and not unfrequently turned them away towards Walsingham, whom she regarded as her future husband; and notwithstanding the sinister report of the elderly gentleman, she easily concluded that he was more or less mad, and consequently did not credit a word. It is very hard to relieve the mind of a good impression, and equally difficult, when under that delusion, to credit a bad one.

She had not in her own mind a shadow of a doubt but that Douglass was in the refreshment-room, and not knowing the value of the notes on the table, looked on with careless indifference. The cards were counted rapidly—the red was proclaimed winner—the rakes were at work, when the old stranger called out in French, and so just in its pronunciation that he might have been mistaken for a Parisian, "Stop! Count the cards again." The dealer, who well knew he had counted erroneously, swept away the tell-tale of his villany; upon which Douglass made a grasp at and succeeded in obtaining his notes. One of the croupiers immediately rose and called upon the police—many of whom are in constant attendance to remove losing players, who not only lose their money and their tempers, but not unfrequently their reason—and a most serious confusion occurred. Fortunately, however, one or two gentlemen had counted the cards and had noticed the *mistake;* and they stepped forward and declared that they would never play again if the croupier did not proceed without further interruption, and pay the amount of the stakes down. This was done, and the elderly gentleman, taking the mask by the hand, asked him if what he had just witnessed was not enough to convince him that, independent of the run of the table, there was a run against which no man could successfully compete.

All arguments were useless;—again the money was staked—again it was lost. By degrees the notes grew fewer and fewer, whilst agitation increased, and words muttered through the fixed teeth, in which even the devil was invoked with a religious fervour, came audibly upon the ear. At length the last of all the store was on the table. The croupiers regarded it with indifference, and heeded with still less indifference the many curses of ill fortune which liberally flowed from the mouth of the loser in low inarticulate tones. He now watched the cards as they fell on the table with an eye which glittered through the mask; the hand was feverish and convulsive, the ears stood out like a dog's when listening; the very hair on the head seemed to move. The colour lost—the last note was swept away, and the loser left gazing on the table with a vacant stare.

Julia had throughout the scene steadily watched the player. She who regarded a slight stake as grievous gaming, shook with horror when three thousand francs, the utmost limit allowed, was rashly risked, and as she drew Amelia closer to her, she said, "What a scene! who would gamble, to suffer the torments of that unfortunate man? How thoroughly do I *despise* any one

who thus might impoverish a family for a momentary excitement! I wish that Douglass could see this, and be acquainted with that strange old gentleman. Again he loses; his whole frame seems convulsed—Ah! that is his last note—perhaps his all—how he trembles with anxiety! it is gone, and perhaps he is a beggar. Look how he continues like a statue."

At this moment, Douglass, unable to contain his temper, broke out in a fit of cursing and execration, and tearing off his mask, stood recognised by his wife. She gave a loud shriek and fell into the arms of Walsingham—and that shriek recalled Douglass to his senses. She was hurried out of the room, attended by one of the commissioners, who with the assistance of the old stranger carried her down stairs and placed her in Walsingham's carriage. Douglass followed close, confounded at this sudden *éclaircissement* which he himself had occasioned, and told the servant to drive home, whilst the old man said, "Just across the street to the Hôtel des Princes." Julia had recovered, although she had not spoken, and was perfectly sensible that she was not one minute in the carriage on her return home, although a quarter of an hour had been expended in driving her to the ball.

Amelia, who at once saw through the whole artifice, was shocked to think Walsingham could have lent his aid to so palpable a deception; and her anger, great from this cause, was heightened when she found that Walsingham never attended her home: nor was he at the carriage door when that door was opened. Julia suffered herself to be led to her room by her husband; but no sooner had she reached it, than she desired him to leave her to her own reflections for a short time. This however was denied her, and before a flow of tears came to her relief, Stanhope stood by her side, with her sister Margaret. This timely interference restored her much. Amelia interposed her authority, declaring Mrs. Douglass too fatigued to be more excited; and her sister Margaret, who had not even proffered a kiss, was glad enough to retire to rest.

CHAPTER VII.

When Stanhope had determined on visiting Paris, he told his sailor valet John Jenkins to pack up and get ready to accompany him, and John, who had heard much of France and Frenchmen from those with whom he had sailed, believed he was going into the claws of the black gentleman himself. He, however, had imbibed the notion that Frenchmen lived upon nothing but frogs and *soupe maigre;* that they were all thin, lantern-bodied people, and that one Englishman could easily master any three of the "great nation." He therefore prepared for his voyage with as much caution and foresight as if he had been going in a trader to New South Wales; and conscientiously believing that all natives of France were for ever at war, at least within their own breasts, with the English, he resolved to seize the first opportunity of showing himself a worthy son of the sea, and one determined to come to blows upon the most trivial occasion.

A great part of Stanhope's luggage had been forwarded by the wagon; and very much astonished was he to find he had to pay a sum for the conveyance of it which far exceeded his expectations. However, as he had to think and act for his wife, whose indolence was excessive, and being rather fatigued with his travelling, he gave the money to John, desiring him to take a receipt; and then, continuing his cautionary remarks, he said, "Mind you count all the boxes, and have them packed to-morrow morning carefully in the steam-boat; and be mindful to keep your eye upon them during the trip across the Channel."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered John.

"And mind, John," continued Stanhope, "that we have not to wait for you, or for the luggage: you must be up early."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"And be very careful, that in the event of Mrs. Stanhope's sea-sickness, you are at hand to attend upon her."

"Ay, ay, sir."

At dawn, John was busily employed in shipping the trunks

and various hampers; he attended the stowage of them down below, keeping the things he thought most requisite uppermost. By eight o'clock the bell had rung to announce the departure of the packet; and Mrs. Stanhope for once in her life appeared excited, or perhaps frightened, when she saw herself launched, as it were, into the deep ocean. She turned from the sameness of the scene before her to the white cliffs of Dover, which were fast receding. Even she, cold and insensible as she was, felt those sensations of regret which are ever experienced by persons when first they leave their native land. No one can then command his feelings: it is like severing the head from the body; all we ever knew of life lies behind us; before, is doubt and uncertainty. Then came the increased roughness of the water as the packet drew further from the land; and if any very fine sentimental feelings were rising in the heart of Margaret, she soon found it requisite to think of much more common-place things than rolling oceans, terrific hurricanes, shipwrecks or founderings, to which she believed herself in imminent danger the moment she embarked on board the steamer. There was a simultaneous roar for the steward, and sickness had overtaken the passengers. Stanhope, although he for some time mastered the disagreeable sensation, at last gave way before the enemy, and he and his wife were both sea-sick.

In the mean time, John, although on board a steam-boat, felt himself at sea, and that feeling of freedom which ever attaches itself to the sons of the ocean was felt by him. He walked about the forecastle as if that part of the boat was his own exclusive right; shoved some passengers, who were staggering to and fro, out of his way; and then casting his eye aloft, for the fore-sail was set, he gave a sneering acknowledgment that it was a *sail*, in spite of the sooty blackness of the canvass. His manner soon gave umbrage to one of the crew, who had been on board a man-of-war, and who now, having passed the years of his activity aloft, had become a sailor on board of a steam-packet.

"Hulloa, shipmate!" he began; "do you think the forecastle belongs to you, that you're tacking and wearing, and backing and filling, like a collier tiding it up the river? I'm blessed if you don't put me in mind of the captain of a frigate who was in quarantine at the Motherbank, and swore he did not mind how long he was kept there, as long as no other ship was allowed to ride in the roadstead besides his own. Now, I should very much like to know if you learnt your manners and

got your sliding gunter boots (John had on top-boots) on board a man-of-war; for I'd have you to know that the forecastle was never made for a shore-going chap with a long coat and short trousers."

"Lord love you!" said John; "a pretty fellow you are for a forecastle-man, who cannot tell a seaman by his figure-head without looking how he's rigged. Why, I knew you for a man-of-war's man in spite of your black face; and if you could see as far through a deal plank as a gimlet, you might have seen from my topping the officer over those sea-sick savages, that I knew the stem from the stern, and have heard many a shot whiz as loud as that cursed hot water which comes spilling out of your hollow main-mast, which lets out smoke enough for all the galley funnels of the Channel fleet."

"You talk of shot, shipmate," replied the seaman; "why, you are hardly old enough to remember a good broadside; but if so be that you're inclined to hear a yarn, whilst all your people abaft are bellowing for buckets, and swabs, and stewards, just bring yourself to an anchor under the lee of this paddle-box, and I'll tell you of what you never saw. But, first of all, take your muzzle-tacking off, and let's know how you ever got your legs into those leather buckets; for you're the first man who ever served before the mast in a man-of-war who took to wearing top-boots."

"Why, shipmate, at this moment I don't exactly know what I am myself; so I don't expect you to tell me. I'm valet, as they calls me, and rubs down my master's clothes; then, when I'm ashore, I looks after the horses and rubs them down a bit; then, I rubs down missus's riding habit; then, I handles the scrub-brooms, and has a sprinkle and scrub at the decks of the house; then, I stand all day as messenger boy; besides being purser's steward, master at arms, captain's steward, and half a score of other appointments. So, do you see, as I was afraid I could not get through all my work without some support for my legs, I bought these new pair of boots."

"I'm blessed if you have not put your foot in it with a vengeance! Here am I, the hazy side of fifty, with nothing to do but now and then man the jib-halyard; for our captain was a lieutenant during the war, and he thinks it looks like old times when he roars out 'Forecastle there!' 'Sir, says I.' 'Man the jib-halyards,' says he. 'All manned,' says I: for when my hands are upon them, that is all they'll get. 'Hoist away the jib,' says he. 'Belay,' says I; 'Sheet,' says he; 'Belay,' says

I. And then, no sooner is that done, than it's, 'Man the jib down-haul,' and we go through the consarn of hauling it down: but he seems to-day taking great care of that pretty woman, and somehow or other, I never could understand why, but if a pretty woman comes on board, he has half the buckets in the craft ready; but if she's an ugly one, she may reach for that, or her soul out, before he would lend a hand. It's devilish odd, John, that's your name, isn't it? that all sailors, whether officers or foremast-men, may be trusted with any thing else but a pretty woman. Well, day passes away, and to-morrow comes, and life goes between a covering of soot, a little French brandy, and now and then a song, and the jib halyards."

"Well," says John, and a jolly life too! But I have plenty to do, and never in mischief; and now I've got to go amongst these long-legged Frenchmen, who, if ever they knew me to have been an English sailor, would properly sarve me out."

"They are a queer set," replied the steamer, "and no doubt of it; and although every day of my blessed life I go over to the coast, yet I never go ashore; for their Custom-house officers would turn a man inside out to find a quid of tobacco. They hate me as they do the devil, because I laugh at them, point to the sea, and give them a hint, that if they show their dirty faces outside, we'd sarve them as we sarved them on board the Nymphe, in 1793."

"Tell us that yarn, my lad, and I'll unpack the provision-basket, where I have stowed away some brandy for master, when he gets to John Crapaud's land."

"To be sure I will, and I like to do it; for, do you mind, we are getting so rusty with this peace, that I'm blessed if I think the lads of the present day will know a round shot from a ball of rope yarns; and as for the names of the officers, who we all looked up to as fellows to eat Frenchmen afloat, they'll be quite forgotten without the action is now and then rubbed up to clear the cobwebs of their memory.

"It was on the 17th of June, 1793, that we started our anchors from Falmouth, in the Nymphe frigate, commanded by Edward Pellew;—he's swapped his name now, and they call him Exmouth, because he lives at Teignmouth: so you see there's something in the mouth after all. Well, away we goes with a nice breeze, and steers away towards the Start Point. We were out for a cruise, and we had heard that one or two Frenchmen had mustered up courage enough to come within sight of old England. Well, we makes the Start Point, and

away we steered to the southward, keeping our eyes wide open, and giving a regular brush of the horizon at sunset and daylight.

"It was just as eight bells was striking, and the boatswain's mate was calling 'Larbowlings ahoy!' that the look-out man forward called out that there was a strange sail to leeward; and, my bobs! didn't we all turn our eyes to the south-east as if we expected a prize. Well, it was, 'Hands, make sail, and no sleep for the middle-watch gentlemen.'"

"Man the jib-halyards," interrupted the captain of the steamboat.

"All manned, sir," roared the old seaman, who had kept the end in his hand, expecting this usual manœuvre.

"Hoist away the jib," roared the officer; "Belay;"—"Sheet;" "Belay;" and down sat the old boy again, having got the down-haul stretched along.

"I'm blessed if he won't wear out the sheeve and the shell of that block yet!" he began, "for he dances the sail up and down about twenty times. It makes those ladies think he's a great navigator, and that Captain Cook did just the same when he sailed round the world in search of niggers.

"Well, as I was saying, when the jib-halyards clapped a stopper on the yarn, it was, 'Hands, make sail,' and by five minutes after four A. M. we had borne up, and were under all canvass, in chase, and the stranger did the same; but I'm blessed if I think it was done to run away: no, John, I think it was done to clear away for action; for no sooner had the Frenchman, and a gallant fellow he was, got all right for a frolic, than he shortens sail, hauls up his foresail, lowers his top-gallant sails, as much as to say, 'Come along a little further out, and we'll have a regular morning's watch amusement, instead of holystoning the decks and wearing out the marines' knees.'

"Well, we all thought that at it we should go like devils; but we were told not to fire, although we were close on board of the Frenchman, at six o'clock, when both captains began to hail, and Pellew, taking off his hat, and making the Frenchman a most polite bow, roars out, 'Long live King George!' upon which we all opened our mouths, and gave three such cheers, that I'm blessed if the ship did not tremble as if we had fired both broadsides at once. Well, sir, the Frenchman hearing these polite cheers, steps forward with a red cap in his hand, which they call a cap of liberty, and waving, said—"

"Forecastle there; man the jib down haul."

"All manned, sir."

"Haul down the jib."

"Forecastle there," said the captain.

"Sir," replied the old sailor.

"Gather the jib on the boom, and stop it neatly down."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"I wish the devil had the captain by the hind leg," said John. "Why can't he let his gingerbread boat paddle along without disturbing his *crew?*"

"I axes your pardon, Mr. John," said the old boy; "but although this craft is a steamer, she's no gingerbread boat neither."

"I begs your pardon, shipmate; I was only a little adrift because that jib down-haul was a stopper on your yarn: so never mind the boat or the gingerbread, but start ahead again."

"She's as fine a craft," said the old sailor, with that admiration which seamen ever have for the ship to which they belong, "as ever skimmed across the Channel. I've known her run a race with a breeze of wind, and get across before it overtook her: and as for a duck in a seaway, just mark how easy she rolls; my sarvice, Mr. Gingerbread, that sticks in my throat, and I should like to wash it down."

"I understand the signal," replied John, and in a moment he dived below and brought up a bottle of brandy. "Here it is, my lad, and proper good stuff as ever was made. I thought master might be sea-sick, and missus quarmish, so I brought it for them; but as I feel rather queer myself, and you have got some gingerbread in your throat, we had better manage a small allowance ourselves."

"That's all right," said the old sailor, drawing breath with difficulty after the copious potation; "and now I can go ahead again, as the captain says to the engineer. Well, shipmate, as I was a saying, the French captain waves a red cap and jabbers something to his crew, who gave three cheers, ghosts of ours, and monseer, with his hullabaloo chaps, set up a howl of 'Vive la republique!' which means, success to every man who cuts his master's throat, or makes him as poor as his servant. We all of us stood gaping and wondering what would come next, for we were running up alongside, and the Frenchman had his colours up as proudly as if he was going to show us the way into Brest, whilst one of the crew stepped aloft up the main rigging with the red night-cap in his hand. and screwed it on to the mast-head, and down he comes from aloft, and looks at it, as much as to say, 'We are never going to strike those colours,'

"'That's all right,' said the captain: 'and when I put my hat on my head, my lads, do you begin to see if you can't take that night-cap from the mainmast-head.' We got all ready, every gun was pointed, the matches were all blown, our eyes were all on the captain, when, after making a low bow to the Frenchman,—and I'm blessed if ever I saw so much politeness before,—we began to murder each other, he raised his hat to his head, and—"

"Forecastle there," said the captain of the steamer.

"Hulloa!" said John in a towering rage. "I suppose you want that jib up and down again."

"Sir," interrupted the old sailor.

"Clear away the jib, and let's know when it's ready for hoisting."

Away went the seamen, and after the usual order delivered in a slow pompous voice, for grandeur never articulates quickly, the steam-boat was under half her canvass, the old sailor soon got seated, having the end of the down-haul in his hand, and after taking another glass to refresh himself, proceeded:—"That jib's the life of me, it keeps me in exercise; and I should grow as round as the boiler below if I had not to trot backward and forward like the shaft of the engine.—Well, John, up goes the captain's hat, and before he had placed it on his crown, smack went a broadside into the Frenchman, and we stopped their parley-wous, and their scraping and bowing. We only left some with one leg to turn round upon; but they did not take it quietly at all,—not a bit of it, for they set to work in right good earnest, and I never saw less ceremony or politeness on either side.

"Both ships were running alongside of each other within hailing distance, and we both did our best to load and fire without spending much time upon that duty. We began this hammer-and-tongs work at fifteen minutes after six, and we had one quarter of an hour's good hard slapping work without any alteration taking place or any masts fallen, when all of a sudden Mrs. Crapaud hauled up about eight points, and we after her; but still she fought like a good one, and when, at seven o'clock, the mizen-mast of the Frenchman fell, why we gave three hearty cheers again."

"What are you looking at?" said John.

"Why, I saw the captain put his speaking-trumpet to his mouth; and if your pretty missus had not spoken at the time, the jib would have come down again."

"Well, then, bear-a-hand and get on, mate, the mizen-mast was down."

"Ah! right enough, John; it was just after it fell that the Frenchman, whose wheel had been shot away, paid round off and fell right aboard of us, coming stern on the jib-boom, passing between our fore and main-mast. Now we had not been blazed away at all this time for nothing: our main-mast was none the better for the large pieces which were out of it, and stood none the steadier for the main and spring stays being shot away, for the Frenchman had come right abeam of us, and the jib-boom end was against our main-mast head."

"Avast heaving, old boy, about the jib! that captain of yours is looking this way, and if he sees your lips move, he'll see the word jib, and we shall be done again for five minutes."

"Well, then, he can't understand this: the jib-boom was—"

"Forecastle there! man the jib down-haul."

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" said John, "I have heard of the patience of a man not unlike jib in sound, but I'm blessed if he could have stood this; for, to a dead certainty, had he sailed under that chap with the trumpet (although he might whisper from the funnel-head to the taffrail), he would have hung himself with the halyards of that confounded jib."

"Now then, shipmate, at it again; we must nearly come to a finish before we hear of the jib again."

"Likely enough, John, without some strange passenger comes on deck; and then up she goes again.—Well, as I was saying, the jib-boom of the Frenchman gave way, our mainmast stood as stiff as a midshipman on half pay, and both ships fell alongside of one another: then we got at it again like two hungry bull-dogs, for we could not be separated, as the main-topmast studding-sail-boom iron of the Frenchman got foul of the larboard leech rope of the main-topsail, and held us as fast and in as good a position as we could have wished. The captain thought the Frenchman was all for boarding, and he thought it would be just as well to be ready; but no sooner were we on deck than it became evident that our adversaries were not much inclined for that fun; so we took a gentle hint from our captain, and away we went on board of her. I don't know, John, if ever you were consarned in one of those affairs, but I promise you it's no joke swallowing an iron pike, or being ready prepared for the cook by being spitted: but when there is this fun to be played at, in spite of all the Frenchmen say, there's no man in the world like an English sailor. We drove them before us like

sheep; and although occasionally they faced about and bravely defended their ship, yet the chance was gone. Our lads having gained a good footing, pushed along; nothing could stop us, neither spear, boarding-pike, pistol, musket, nor cutlass; the last stand they made was but for a second, when down came the colours and the Cleopatra was a prize. That's the way to do it, John; no half laughs and purser's grin,—no trying when you are within range, then hauling off to load the guns:—no, no,—on we go cutlass in hand, three cheers for our king and our captain, stand from under all our enemies, and in fifty minutes from the time we began, the Cleopatra was our prize. Well, down comes this precious cap, which was made of wood and daubed over with red paint. There was some kind of a spear fastened to it; and I believe it was the first cap for a liberty man that we had had on board an English ship since the commencement of the war, for this was the first frigate taken; and whenever I get a Frenchman on board who has got a drop of brandy, I set him down and give him a regular good true and faithful account of some naval victory; but I always like this best; and I tells them that we have sarved them out once or twice, and are all ready to do it again; but as for those shore-going chaps all covered with green and silver, I never speaks to them, because they came on board one day, and when I was telling them a little spice of my mind about frigates and other vessels, I'm blessed if they did not order from that day that we should not smoke alongside the wharfs, and they keeps us shivering in winter like monkeys in frosts, and won't let us have a fire to warm ourselves. I'll tell you what happened to me the other day: I was just going on shore, when—"

"Man the jib-halyards forward!"

"Oh! it's no use," said John, "I can't stand it no longer, if you can; and I'm blessed if I don't go to sleep."

"All manned, sir."

"Hoist away the jib."

"Now, that man," continued John, "is what I call a regular fool; he thinks those passengers take him for a great officer, and the very man whom he thought to captivate by the roughness of his voice is an old admiral. I'm off down below for a caulk, old boy: so take another drop. If I hear the sound of the jib down-haul, I shall know you are taking your daily exercise."

The Stanhopes in course of time found themselves alongside the wharf at Boulogne; the crowd were kept off by means

of ropes, and the passengers landed, conveyed to the Custom-house hard by, the passports examined, and the victims, under the several charges of the several commissioners, on their route to their hotels. Only John remained on board; and there he stuck close to his hamper, like a sentinel over his charge.

"Why don't you go on shore?" said the commander.

"No, I thank you, Mr. Jib Halyards, I've got something here to take charge of; and I'm blessed if any Frenchman alive overhauls it without having a skirmish with me."

By this time the gend'arme, whose business it was to see the steamboat clear, and superintend the landing of the luggage, came up and desired him to walk on shore. Jack stood like a man expecting to fight, and after measuring his long adversary from head to foot, told him in plain English he might go to the place where he conscientiously believed all Frenchmen congregated after their relations had paid the funeral fees. Upon this well-understood ejaculation, the gend'arme called one or two more of his fraternity, and Jack was forcibly ejected, examined, and despatched. He ran to his master, and made loud complaints that he could not be responsible,—no, not even if his master was starved.

"Starved!" said Stanhope; "what the devil is to starve us here, and what has our luggage to do with starvation?"

"Do with it!" said Jack in surprise; "why, all the provisions for the long cruise is in the hamper. I knew you nor missus either could not live upon frogs, so I laid in provisions and wine enough for a month. I've brought over some real good brandy, lots of eggs, for they can't get the frogs into them; and I've stowed away some bread, and butter, and hams. If these hungry scoundrels only smell the purser's store-room, we must live upon their cursed nastiness and swallow animals no Christians ever ate before."

Stanhope could not help being amused at the prudent foresight of his faithful man John; but no persuasion of his could convince him that there was no apprehension of short allowance; and Stanhope saw that he should have no little trouble with his servant, who, although he was so faithful, was mightily scrupulous lest the honour of England should be compromised. Jack's reason for having shipped a pair of top-boots was that he might not be suspected of being a seaman; but no disguise would have been effectual: his suspicions that every body approached him to do some bodily injury, kept him perpetually on his guard; and long before Stanhope had succeeded in get-

ting his dinner, his man John was safely lodged in gaol for having, against all laws of France, inflicted a most tremendous hit upon the nose of a Frenchman, which caused a copious flow of that which, in kind remembrance to the land about Bordeaux, has been christened as claret. This detained the travellers: it required money more than justice to release him, and only made John more resolute in his determination to take the law into his own hand, and inflict the penalty upon any of the discontented subjects of France. At last, after a volume of oaths most liberally bestowed upon the postilion and their boots, Stanhope and his wife were packed up for Paris, and John and the lady's maid were in the rumble. Away they went, whips cracking, carriage creaking, smack into every gutter the driver could find, going down, and rattling and shaking over every paved piece they could muster going up hill. Even Margaret was kept awake, for sleep was impossible; and John, who was sufficiently civilised to pass his right arm round the waist of the maid lest she might hurt her delicate back, amused her by sweariug at all frogs and Frenchmen.

CHAPTER VIII.

The suspicions which Julia had long entertained in silence, for she had never had breathed a word even to her sworn friend Amelia, now broke upon her in all the force of truth; and she felt assured that the large sum of money she had seen sacrificed by her husband was not by any means the first which had tended to enrich the coffers of the Salon. Her idea, that having the place where Houghton was sacrificed constantly before her husband's eye, he might be led to avoid the shoal over which the breakers so distinctly rolled, was erroneous; and we are not certain if the publicity of errors does not, by exciting curiosity, rather swell than diminish the victims. Sleep never came to close her eyes: how far ruin was already certain, remained uncertain; how far any provision might have been made for her son, was likewise doubtful; and how soon all the gay apparel of Fortune might be exchanged for the more sombre hues of poverty, was unknown. She could not believe one word her husband said: he had evidently deceived her, and gave her the double pain of seeing with her own eyes and hearing with her own ears the degradation of her husband. Still, she loved him: she had never been warped by the cold ways of this unfeeling world; she had been bred in a village, and nurtured in the country; the vicious contamination of large cities had never reached her unsuspecting heart, and she even then loved, and could not bear to despise the man with whom she had at the altar sworn to receive for better for worse.

During this long night she endeavoured to fortify herself for the morrow. She had now to conceal from others her bitterest feelings: she had to appear contented when she knew no comfort. That night her hands were frequently clasped as she prayed Heaven to avert worse consequences than poverty; and her prayers, long and frequent, were more for the guardianship of her husband than herself. Hour after hour, as time ever lingers in pain and misery, slowly ticked through the night of darkness she remained awake. Still, there was a beam of hope

through the thickest cloud. Stanhope had arrived, and through him she calculated she might ensure a reformation; but, to meet her husband,—to meet him with liar stamped upon his pale countenance—and quivering lip, there was the trial! Long before the usual time of rising she was alone in her bed-room. Her husband had crept from her side without one word having passed, and the door was scarcely closed before it was again opened by Amelia: she threw herself into Julia's arms, and burst into a flood of tears.

Julia instantly thought more of her friend than of herself: she began the work of consolation, but was interrupted by Amelia.

"Tell me," she said, "has any thing passed: have you spoken one word to him?"

"Not a syllable. When he awoke—if he slept, he crept silently out: you must have watched for him."

"I did: more than an hour have I been seated in the adjoining room. I could not sleep—for I felt my love sacrificed: I cannot but like, nay, love Walsingham; whilst I feel he must have led your husband, and been a partner to the deception of last night."

"It is a painful discovery, Amelia, for us both. You are yet free; although promised, your brother may save you from the alliance you have consented to form. But for me, what remains?—can my husband, if I once despise him, really love me?—can a man feel himself an object of esteem and affection who has been abased by his own wife? Never! the pride of their sex revolts against submission to our weaker nature; we may guide by affection, but we can never rule by it; and I could but ill bear to see my husband's eyes withdrawn from mine, like a coward who dares not look his adversary in the face. But I have sworn to leave all others and cling only unto him; and as Heaven and yourself are the witnesses to this oath, no time, no circumstances shall ever estrange me from him: I have formed a resolution how to act, and I will never disgrace him or myself. Let us consider your case: we must be satisfied of the respectability of Walsingham. I cannot forget the words of that old man; from him we might glean the truth, for he is not cautious to conceal it: Stanhope can introduce himself to him, and we may arrive at a safer conclusion than a hasty marriage."

There was a slight rap at the door, and her maid entered. She looked frightened, and fearful to speak before Amelia.—

"Quick," said Julia; "do not stay shivering out your words: what brings you here at this early hour? and what have you seen to cause this tremble?"

"My master, ma'am," replied the servant, "is busily employed packing up his clothes; he has ordered his cabriolet, and I can't help thinking he is going to fight a duel. There has been all night great noises in the street, and, Lord help me! I have seen more unlucky omens than ever I did before."

"Tell your master I wish to see him," said Julia. "Amelia, my dear, leave me alone; there must be no witnesses to the painful meeting: only mind, if the cabriolet arrives before he comes up stairs, then run to your brother, and tell him to hinder my husband's departure."

She was alone in the room which opened into that in which her child was sleeping; she sent the nurse away, and knelt by the side of the bed: but her prayers were hasty and inarticulate, for although her lips muttered the words which her heart dictated, yet were her ears pointed to catch the sound of those footsteps never until now dreaded to be heard, and the mind, ill at ease, was not solely fixed upon her God. She started up, for she heard his approach: the door was opened of the outer room, and closed; she looked—her husband stood by her bed-side expecting to find her there. His face seemed worn down with care and vexation, and as he turned to advance into the inner room, there was a tear coursing down his cheek. It was but one spring: with outstretched arms she rushed into her husband's, and fell senseless on his shoulders. He held her there, and looked upon this scene of distress which he had occasioned; and sadly contrasted was it with the sleeping innocence of his boy;—his heart too full,—for his shame plainly showed he yet had a heart to feel,—and he could not contain that living spring of water, the best attestation of a manly and contrite heart. Gently she raised her head as she recovered, until her eyes met his; then she saw his tears, and disregarding every cause she had received for rebuke, she kissed them again and again, hastily ejaculating, "Thank God—thank God, you have not left me! —you thought to do it, Robert,—to have left me and that innocent child. There is no occasion for such cruel conduct; for, as there is a God above, I love you tenderly and sincerely. There,—dry your tears; they ill become a man, excepting in excessive sorrow."

"How can I, dearest Julia, look on you I have so cruelly, so

wantonly abused? I did intend to leave you, I did even meditate self-destruction."

She clasped his arms, and looking him full in the face, whispered in a hurried murmur: "Have you no fear for eternity, that, thus uncalled, you dare appear before HIM?"

"I feel," he continued, "the wretch I am: and yet it looks as if the hand of Fate had led me on. You have made me more wretched by your kindness. Perhaps my pride might have supported me, had you shunned me: but thus to receive me unmans me quite."

"Listen, Robert, to me. I feel myself now above my sex, for I have conquered their worst feeling—revenge. From this moment, not one word ever passes my lips; it was a dream last night, which those tears have dissipated: no rebuke, no open reproof,—or, what is worse, no cowardly hint or distant innuendo,—shall ever fall from my lips. I ask only one favour—nay, two: your love as constant and as true as when first we married; and, since it is above you to conquer a disposition, to fly from it to our country seat, there to remain in comparative seclusion, and for that child to recover by prudence the loss which a temporary aberration of intellect might have occasioned."

Douglass hung down his head and made no reply. She watched him long and anxiously: no answer was made.

"Speak," she said, "and let me know the worst: is your love estranged from me?"

"As Heaven is my witness," replied Robert, "no! I love you,—I adore you; but I am so much fallen in my own esteem, that I fear you: I tell you, Julia, I dare not answer your question."

"Why not, Robert? You have already answered what I feared from your silence the most. The other is easy: a few days may fathom the character of Walsingham; and if he is the man he represents himself to be, we can after the marriage return home."

"Home!" ejaculated Douglass; "we have no home."

Julia's eyes were riveted upon him, as if to satisfy herself that the great excitement of the past night had not in reality driven him to madness. His eyes, though abashed, were reasonable: there was no vacant stare, such as idiotism entails on age,—there was no flash of fury as beams in the glance of a maniac; but there was deep remorse, and worse—melancholy.

"Have I asked," continued Julia, "too much? is the request

to forego that which must end in ruin unreasonable ?—See there, Robert, as that little pouting angel, with his face flushed with sleep, seems to smile upon you,—have you no duty you owe to him ? This is no place for him; here, beset by temptation which you have not resolution to overcome or avoid, we day after day sink more and more into poverty: at home, we can economise, we can live prudently and frugally. Promise me but this—to return to Longdale, and never shall this morning's conversation again be intruded upon you."

"I cannot—I dare not promise that I never can perform. Julia, promise me not to upbraid me with my perfidy—not to scorn me for my baseness, and the words which hang upon my lips, and which fear alone restrains from uttering, shall be spoken: but until that promise is made, I am for ever silent."

"It is my duty to do as you desire—my wish to do that which can alleviate any sufferings; but why this agitation concerning so common a question ? I would only ask you to forego the Italian journey for the greater quiet of home. Why not return there ?—You do not, my dear Robert, look as you usually look; what can so alarm you ?"

"Now, I know you will despise me,—indeed already has the word escaped your lips—when you saw me, in the frenzy of the moment, stake the last of the sum, which never should have been realised. Julia, Longdale is not ours—it is sold !"

Julia started back from him in alarm. "Sold !" she repeated; "and the money for the purchase—"

"—Is lost—gambled away, thrown to sharpers."

"And are we beggars ? are we absolutely, irrecoverably ruined ?"

"Not quite. You have forced from me that which I would have wished some other to have disclosed. It was your sweet forgiveness of my last night's imprudence which has made me bolder than the impoverisher of his wife and child should be: but I cannot recover what is lost; the rest I leave to your disposal."

"My God ! my God !" ejaculated Julia: "Longdale sold ! the money dissipated ! that boy a beggar !—worse, excepting his death or his sickness, could not have befallen him. But something is left: as you value the word you have pledged me, let the settlement drawn up by poor Verity be signed."

"It would be useless; the property on which this settlement was made no longer exists: but all that is left, I swear most solemnly, shall be instantly settled upon yourself and child."

"Stop, Robert. For myself I care not the value of the meanest trifle. I am your wife, and neither poverty nor deceit shall estrange me from you. As faithful as I was in affluence, so will I be in poverty: my affection shall increase with the necessity of greater affection, for I love you in spite of the ruin you have entailed upon us.—It is needless to hang down your head—this is no time for tears; this instant show me the account of the losses, and let me have the satisfaction of knowing that we are not absolute beggars. Fortunately, every thing is paid here, and I do not owe one franc in Paris.—But before we begin, remember this,—our misfortunes must be kept an entire secret; we want no words of pity expressed with a malicious sneer. We can retire from Paris, and in seclusion seek a less dangerous asylum.—Nay, look not so suspiciously upon me: as I live, and hope for forgiveness hereafter, never will I recall this conversation to your mind. In return I ask for those evenings of innocent recreation of which I have been lately deprived; let your wife be your companion and your friend. I almost fear to trust you from my sight: but you could not leave me now, when I can forgive all but your absence."

"I never thought, Julia, to have fallen so low in my own estimation; and reckless, improvident, thoughtless, criminal, as I have been, I should feel my parting with you my greatest misery. If my future conduct can atone for the past, trust once more to him who has deceived you, and we may yet be far from beggars, and our child far from the inheritor of misery. Your voice has reclaimed me when advice from others failed: if it is possible for the gamester to become honest, that miracle you have worked in me."

"Then I am satisfied,—nay, I could almost bless the deception which discovered the error. Come, come, we must not look too much on the dark side; there may be a gleam of hope. Have you kept an account of your losses, so that no mistake could occur?"

"Yes, I have recorded them faithfully, and each time that I looked at them, made useless vows of amendment."

"Bring me the account directly: I must be satisfied now, where I should have thought it an impertinence to have intruded. In half an hour I shall be dressed, and here in my own room we will arrange our future proceedings. Mind you receive Stanhope properly: you must shake that gloom from your countenance, and learn from me to bear misfortune, since that misfortune is to lead to domestic comfort."

Julia now underwent the misery of the toilet; she never betrayed the least uneasiness of her mind; and the long restless night, with all the fatigue it had caused, the care-worn countenance, the pallid cheeks, had been removed by the excitement she had undergone. Even now her face looked more cheerful than usual, for she had, in spite of the heavy loss, entertained some hope that much yet remained: and so much did that charm of life illuminate her countenance, that her servant remarked, she was glad Mr. Stanhope had arrived, for her mistress looked so much better already.

No sooner was the toilet completed than she sent to apprise her husband. He came instantly with the heavy account of his losses; and if Julia was startled at the first announcement of this calamity, she was still more shocked when she saw the heavy sum which had passed to Walsingham. At this, the blood forsook her cheek,—he must be a gamester! and the old stranger's words rose up confirmed.

On her expressing her surprise and regret at this discovery, Douglass boldly stood forward to protect the character of his friend. He told the truth,—that at first the play was insignificant, and that the stakes were increased at his request; that Walsingham had steadily recommended him to avoid playing, had warned him of the dangerous odds against him at the Salon, and that even at the very last he had counselled him to avoid running the risk he had done, and told him of the probable result; that the fifteen thousand pounds which he had won, had been the result of continued good fortune, which Douglass could neither beat by play, nor turn aside by one good favourable current of the fickle goddess.

"This, no doubt," replied Julia, "is true, since you say it is so; but to whom is Amelia about to be married?—a confessed gamester! This enormous sum is not the result of one night's misfortune, but of a succession of fortunate events. Now, indeed, I can well account for the animated appearance of this man when he left his deeply-studied discourse to play with you. It is strange, but I regret the loss of this money more than the four times heavier loss by which the Salon has profited.—Robert, I ask you a favour. I see we yet have enough to keep us in respectability—that by prudence we may yet recover ourselves. Now let us do an act of justice to Amelia; let us find out this old stranger, and from him learn the character of Walsingham. I leave this to you. The worst, thank God, is

known; let us hope for a future of greater ease and more rational amusement."

When Julia entered the breakfast-room, it was remarked by all that she looked most healthy and happy, and that although Douglass's countenance had become much care-worn, still there was a brightness about him which seemed like returning health. The parties met with the greatest cordiality; Margaret expressing herself surprised to find any comfort in Paris; and Stanhope was, as usual, all activity to get his various trunks and boxes safe to his hotel. He seized the first moment to send his sailor valet for this purpose. John was excessively indignant at the continued cry of "John Bull," which met his ears,—for Frenchmen have not even as yet become perfectly reconciled to top-boots, excepting on jockeys' legs. And thus the first morning passed: no Walsingham appeared; the luggage was safely housed, and the Stanhope family installed.

Amelia had not quite so easily recovered the deception of the preceding night, and although perfectly in the dark as to the knowledge of the loss, she was quite satisfied that a painful discovery had been made, and from the words of the servant, was more than apprehensive, that some great and unfortunate result might occur. Great, therefore, was her satisfaction at finding the current of domestic felicity gliding onward without interruption. She caught the lively glow of countenance from Julia; and Stanhope remarked that love gave a greater beauty to the cheeks of the young, than all the mornings' walks of spring, or the exercise of frosty winter. All seemed animated, all happy, but Douglass; in his mind all the evil he had entailed not only on himself and child, but on Amelia, forced itself in spite of the vacant laugh by which he hoped in forced hilarity to suffocate the rising devil. That Walsingham had never been his schoolfellow, he well knew; that he had invited him to the house, after any one might have suspected his character was true; that he had seen the gradual approach of pretended affection without stepping in to stop it, was evident: and what might not be the consequence of this imprudence, since Amelia's affections were undisguisedly placed upon Walsingham?

CHAPTER IX.

The first day after the arrival of the Stanhopes passed without a visit from Mr. Walsingham; which Stanhope thought strange enough for a lover, and one who only the night before had made a regular downright offer, which had been as regularly accepted.

Douglass, who remarked this omission, resolved at once to discover the reason of his absence; for Amelia, apprehensive that it was occasioned by sickness, was becoming seriously alarmed for the life of the villain to whom she was so unfortunately and sincerely attached.

Having told Julia of his purport, he repaired to the lodgings of the man who had involved him almost in total ruin. On inquiry if Walsingham was within, he was answered that the person so designated had left his apartments that morning, and had taken with him some of his effects; and although they could not tell him where he had gone, yet that they suspected he had not left Paris.

To Douglass's inquiry if any person had called upon him since two that morning, he received for answer that some people generally called at his house at that hour, that they remained about twenty minutes, and then left one at short intervals from the other.

It was a mystery which even Douglass could not unravel. "If," thought he, "flight had been his object, he would not have merely changed his abode; besides, who could accuse him? If I had followed his counsel, it is true, I might have been more seriously ruined than at present, for I should have continued play; but he warned me of the consequences, and I stand afraid to meet the gaze even of my own wife."

Thus pondering on his way back to his hotel, he hardly noticed the small knots of people who had congregated together, and who were busily employed in discussing some measures which the government had published in the Moniteur. If there were more violent gesticulations—more compressed lips—more

anxious hands passing over more heated foreheads, Douglass scarce noticed for some time: but even he, whose heart was full to the brim, could not pass an indifferent spectator to the scene around him. He was now opposite Tortoni's; and even if his thoughts could have banished the outer world entirely, yet the concourse of people through which he had to force his way would have roused his slumbering attention.

Aware that his wife would anxiously await his arrival, he endeavoured to push through the crowd; but he shortly found himself so hemmed in, that all advancing or retreating was impracticable. On every side he now heard loud and vehement complaints against the government; each man's voice seemed raised beyond its common pitch; and open sedition was bruited about without fear of even the long ears of the police. In front of Tortoni's, a young man seemed addressing those near him; and by his side, he thought he once caught a glimpse of Walsingham: but the human tide was much agitated, and he was carried to and fro as the impulse of those behind him was communicated to those around them.

In vain he endeavoured to understand this popular commotion, then so very uncommon in Paris: he could only glean in the din of words one uninterrupted flow of curses upon the king and his ministry. The bigotry of the one and the tyranny of the other seemed the burden of the complaint, which was accompanied by every malediction which the nimble tongue of a Frenchman could murmur.

This all seemed inexplicable to Douglass. Ever since he had resided in France, he had remarked the internal quiet which pervaded the whole country: every one seemed satisfied. The conquest of Algiers had contributed its share to excite the enthusiasm of France; for the failure of the attack had been regarded as almost a certainty by that nation whose fleet under Exmouth had humbled the haughtiness of the Dey. To the flattering gazette of conquests, was added a long account of the immense treasure which was on its way to the French capital; and the French, naturally a lively nation, and a people wrapped up in military glory, could not contain the satisfaction they experienced as the news was promulgated. The other nations of the world were likewise pleased that the efforts of France had been crowned with success. They saw before them a spot long since in the hands of barbarians now offering a focus for general civilisation throughout Africa: the chains and their rivets were struck from the limbs of the slave,—trade would be enlarged,—

another harbour would be opened to the world without the fear of pirates; and hardly any conquest met with more general satisfaction from the entire Christian world than the conquest and the capture of Algiers prior to this day. France had no reason to fear a comparison in regard to internal pacification with any nation of Europe: the new elections, which had occupied a small portion of public attention, had terminated in a satisfactory return; the liberty of the press,—the freedom of public discussion, and all those rights which give and uphold a liberal government, restraining the advance of the one, and curbing the slightest step of power between the people and the crown,—was delegated to men whom the nation had just selected. What, then, could have occasioned this sudden tumult, in which the voice of moderation and reason was drowned in the wild cries of "*Vive la République!—aux armes! aux armes!*" Even at that moment, had the idol of France attempted to turn the tide of popular feeling by any act indicative of reason and coolness, he would have sacrificed his popularity. The French once excited are not easily calmed: no men listen to reason or moderation with less attentive ears when their blood is a little heated than Parisians. If they fail to relieve themselves by a copious discharge of words, blood invariably follows.

The first torrent of abuse having lost, from the wideness of its current, a portion of the strength and power it maintained in its narrowed channel, other words besides curses became audible. "The liberty of the press suspended!" cried one, whose infuriated looks betokened the low radical partisan. "The new chamber again dissolved!" roared another, who had lately given his vote and secured the return of his favourite. "The franchise of the electors of the smaller colleges annihilated!" clamoured a beardless hatch of insurrection; whilst, as each contributed his grievances to swell the tide, the cry increased of "*Aux armes! aux armes!*"

Around Paris at that moment there were twenty thousand choice troops; they were supported by trains of artillery, and flanked by the finest cavalry of that great country; but on this evening, Monday the 26th July, the same feeling seems to have animated every breast: even the soldier and the police were inactive, and the first impulse was given unchecked by any authority or power. The unexpected blow to the liberties of France seemed alike to have astounded the upper and middle classes; whilst the lower class caught the opportunity thus offered them

of either resisting the ordinances, or of making them a stepping-stone to greater popular power.

By degrees, as one man made way for another, Douglass pushed through the crowd, which had already extended itself to the Rue Richelieu. From the windows of the hotel, great masses of people had been remarked walking hastily towards the Boulevards; whilst in the court-yard of the Salon, many people of more respectable appearance were distinguishable. Amongst these, the most calm amid the din of words was the elderly stranger: he stood with his arms folded, apparently listening with much attention, but seldom intruding a word; frequently, when the impassioned speaker would turn to him for a confirmation of his words, the head might be seen to nod an acquiescence, but the lips never moved: and it was whilst the ladies and Stanhope were watching this unusual concourse of people that Douglass entered almost breathless.

"Where is *he?*" asked Amelia, the colour forsaking her cheek.

"I have not seen, and cannot find him," was the answer. "And, indeed," he continued, "no man, I believe, is to be found now in his house: all Paris is in a tumult; and although I have endeavoured to glean the cause of this unusual disturbance, I own myself unequal to explain it."

"Then run over," said Amelia, "to that crowd where the old gentleman stands: he can explain it."

"Robert," said Julia, as he was about to leave the room, "remember your promise never to enter that house again."

"You may trust me, Julia: your eyes will be upon me."

"They never will pry into a husband's actions: your word is a better security than my surveillance."

Robert went, and was soon recognised by the stranger, to whom he at once advanced, offering many thanks for his unheeded advice the previous evening, and regretting the hasty expressions he might have used.

The stranger received him cordially, and inquired after the lady who had *made the scene*, as he worded it: then, without waiting for an answer, he remarked, "You are lucky in one respect; a greater excitement is likely to occur, which will overcome even gambling for a time; for some very serious commotion will follow these ill-advised—these undigested ordinances of the government."

Douglass, willing to give his party every possible information, requested the stranger to accompany him to his hotel; but

he was stopped in his invitation by an abrupt "No." Douglass started back a little annoyed at this reception of an intended civility, when the stranger continued,—"I would not meet Walsingham in the house of one of his victims: besides, if report speaks truth, my company would not be very agreeable to one of the ladies, who might prefer a man more lavish of his praises in regard to an admirer than mine would be. Do you understand, young gentleman?" and out came that sharp elbow against the side of Douglass.

"He is not there, I assure you; and if I could urge as a personal favour what you refuse on the score that your presence would be unwelcome, I should be much gratified by your accordance with my wishes."

"What a precious long-winded set of words!" replied the stranger. "But no words will do to quiet Walsingham; that fellow would go on if the dictionary was paraded against him.—Well, I'm agreed,—go on. Remember one thing—I always speak my mind. Some time ago, I told you, you could better play on a fiddlestick than a system: who's right now? I called you an ass: I don't think your conduct would make me recall my words."

He shook the hand of an overgrown Frenchman as he passed, giving him an expressive wink as he said, "*Tout va bien*," and followed Douglass to the room door: there his guide turned round and expressed his regret that he had in the great excitement forgotten the stranger's name."

"I doubt if you ever knew it," replied the man: "Walsingham never talks about me in society, where my name cannot be uttered but with a curse. My name is Mr. Testy, and the world say I inherit all the wealth of my name."

He was introduced, and he bowed gracefully. He had evidently been used to the highest society, for the polish of those manners never rubs off. His keen eye scanned the countenances of all; but it rested upon Amelia's for a moment, and he said, rather abstractedly, "What a sacrifice!" Recovering himself, he spoke of the ordinances which occasioned this unusual tumult; and, with the quickness of a man accustomed to the manners of the people amongst whom he had so long resided, he concluded his narrative of facts with these words:—"If the police falter for a moment, the throne is in imminent danger. If the forward movement is once given, nothing can retard it. A Frenchman at a charge, when the adverse party has shown weakness, is overpowering: check him at first, and he will never face his

foe. To-night we shall be better informed; perhaps some modification may be offered to soothe these fighting boys; if not, seven's the main, Mr. Douglass, and it's a chance but the people back the caster-out. I fancy you understand that, or you have paid handsomely for a poor education."

Douglass turned away: his face was covered with shame. Julia interposed and requested Mr. Testy to join their party at dinner,—to which, after some reluctance on his part, he consented. Julia was determined at all risks to discover something more about Walsingham; Amelia's heart throbbed when she heard his name mentioned, and Douglass's colour flew to his face, fearing another *éclaircissement*.

Of all the people perfectly indifferent to revolutions, marriages, domestic infelicity, or perspective happiness, Margaret was the queen: she scarcely noticed old Testy, and was quite cool amid the din of voices, which would have startled any other of her sex; whilst Stanhope, who had been told that Testy knew every body and every thing in Paris, was impatient to draw him into some conversation.

Julia quickly perceived how careful her husband was to avoid any reference to the proceedings of the preceding night, and question after question succeeded each other, leaving no gap in the conversation through which either Stanhope or Julia could cut in and occupy old Testy's attention. At last that gap did occur, and Julia instantly asked if Mr. Testy knew a gentleman of the name of Walsingham.

"Not so well," replied Testy in his usual shrewd and keen manner, "as either Mr. Stanhope or Mr. Douglass."

"Then your acquaintance must be slight indeed," replied Stanhope; "for, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the only person even of his household, or his father's household, I ever spoke to, was the old housekeeper in Cavendish-square."

"A curious coincidence of circumstances, indeed," said Testy almost to himself; and then continuing his discourse, he said, "For all that, Mr. Stanhope,—or Captain Stanhope, I believe,—you know more of him than I do."

"Did you see him last night?" asked Julia.

"Yes: after you went home, he returned and remained until a late hour."

"Have you heard of him to-day?" asked Amelia.

"No," replied Testy with some warmth; "and I could wish that any one of *your* name inquired less about him."

The tone and manner with which this was uttered seemed a

damper to any further demands ; but Margaret, who had listened with more than usual attention to these short questions and answers, turned round, and darting some tender looks at old Testy, asked,

"Did you ever know a person of the name of Houghton ?"

Testy appeared a little dismayed at the question, but answered, "I was in the room when he shot himself."

"There was another present also, I believe, Mr. Testy."

"Yes."

"Good God !" said Julia, "I begin to fear even my suspicions are well founded."

"I have not the slightest doubt, madam," remarked Testy, with his habitual sneer, "that if you have formed any suspicions, they will not be without reason."

"Hark ! there is the drum."

"Ay," said Testy ; "and before to-morrow's sunset, there will be more noise and confusion than any will like but Walsingham."

"It is odd," said Amelia, who could not control her desire to hear more of Walsingham, "that we have not seen him to-day."

"I think," said Testy, "you will not regret his absence."

"Oh ! I understand," said the enamoured girl : "he has been all day at his poor father's, Sir William Walsingham's, who is just arrived in Paris, and is old and ill. How could I be so dull as to have forgotten the event ! Perhaps the poor old man is seriously unwell, and Walsingham has been all day in the performance of a dutiful pleasure."

Testy looked up ; and after watching Amelia in silence for a moment or two, he replied, "He need not be quite so dutiful, as I doubt if Sir William will encumber him with much parental civility."

"He has told me," said Amelia, "that he is not on good terms with his father ; but he thought now he could bring about a reconciliation."

"He told you more truth, Miss Stanhope, and more falsehood in the sentence, than even I gave him credit for. Do not let me cause either an angry or a hasty rebuke. I see the drift of the conversation—you wish me to give you my knowledge of this man ; I shall not gratify the curiosity ; not from any ill nature or spleen, but because I never say an ill-natured thing of any one. You best know how you first became acquainted with him,—to me, in regard to Captain Stanhope, quite inexplicable.

I therefore cannot say what I would say as advice to you, Miss Stanhope, nor can I enter upon a subject so painful to Captain Stanhope."

"Upon my honour, Mr. Testy," replied the captain, "I cannot comprehend you: I have told you I have never seen him."

"I can only say, sir," replied Testy, "I wish with all my heart none of your family had ever seen him."

"How came he in this house, Douglass?" asked Stanhope.

"He was Robert's schoolfellow," replied Julia: "there is no mystery about the man."

Testy, who generally kept his eyes on the table, was seen to glance a keen look at Douglass as he said, "I fancy he has been his schoolmaster, rather than schoolfellow, and rather exorbitant in his demands for the education he has bestowed."

There was a painful silence. Julia suspected at once the truth; her husband felt like a false witness under torture of severe cross-examination; Amelia burst into tears and left the room, and was followed by Julia and Margaret; whilst Stanhope, perfectly confounded in the labyrinth of mystery, was unable to pursue the conversation further. After a lapse of time, however, Stanhope recovered himself, and spoke out like the straight-forward man he ever was. "Mr. Testy," he began, "excuse me if I say any thing which you might misapply as regards yourself; and give me the credit of not wishing to say an uncivil word, or to plant an unpleasant feeling in your bosom. You have twice distinctly alluded to me as knowing too much of this Mr. Walsingham; I have as often told you that I really never knew him;—there was a look of discredit to my words."

Testy, whose large quick eyes were fixed upon Stanhope, nodded his head, saying, "Go on: I repeat it again,—you know him; and not many days from this, you will acknowledge it."

"I am not prone, Mr. Testy, to incivilities; but surely the word of a soldier and an Englishman might be respected."

"Certainly," said Testy: "pray go on."

"Well, sir," said Stanhope, his blood rising in spite of his habitual control, for Testy's countenance was as unchangeable as a painted sign over an inn door, "I repeat it again,—I do not know him."

"Just as you please, Captain Stanhope, about that; but pray go on; for although I am anxious to appease your wrath if I

can consistently with my resolution, yet I am equally anxious to know if my throat is to be cut going home to-night."

There was a smile on Stanhope's countenance as he continued,—"Well, well, we will say no more about that at this time. From the hints you have given, and which hints cannot be altogether misunderstood, some suspicion has been excited in mind relative to Mr. Walsingham: now I will be plain with you,—Mr. Walsingham is engaged to be married to my sister."

"I know it," interrupted Testy.

"I am anxious, of course, to learn the character of my future brother-in-law. You know him well; I therefore endeavoured to glean from you something which might make me regard him with sincere affection; and you in reply say things which are evidently so well worded, that they carry with them under their smooth surface poison which reaches even the heart of my sister. I own I have no right to ask this favour of you; but I do ask it: who is this Walsingham?"

"Upon my honour," replied Testy with most provoking coolness, "I should be very much disinclined to swear who he is: I know what he was."

"Then what in the name of the devil was he?" asked Stanhope.

"Ay, now I think you have named his father; and if you ask with such a knowledge of his parent, you might inquire over the way, in the large hell, for his character. I say no more, Captain Stanhope: I shall not tell a lie even to save your sister a pang."

"Is he not the son of Sir William Walsingham?"

"I really should be very sorry to swear that he was, and I cannot absolutely swear that he is not."

"I see it is of no use," said Stanhope in despair, "asking you any question; and yet I will try one more. What would you do if you had a sister going to marry him?"

"Cut her or his throat," replied Testy. "'Faith, the tumult increases in the streets; I must be off,—good night."

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Testy did not stand long making last speeches or bows; when he said "good night," he walked out without any other remark, and was soon in the street. Douglass felt himself relieved from a load he could ill sustain when he departed.

To Stanhope's remarks that he was altogether unfathomable, he responded, that he believed him to be one of those sullen, morose men, whose younger days had been blighted by misfortune, and whose later years had brought no consolation or comfort:—like all men at war within themselves, he added, who cannot see happiness in others but with dissatisfaction, every word he uttered was weighed in the balance of malice, estimating exactly how much the subject could bear, without overtopping the scale and ruining the measure."

"He does indeed appear soured by the world; and yet he wears the proud countenance of good humour, and in his expressions there was more regard for the welfare of Amelia than caution concerning himself. I will go with you to-morrow myself to Mr. Walsingham, for his conduct is curious. I never knew the man who was engaged to a woman and who omitted to visit her without something very extraordinary interposed."

Scarcely had Stanhope concluded his sentence than Walsingham appeared. He was introduced to Stanhope; the latter offered his hand, which was accepted, and the cold, shivering, clammy feel made Stanhope remark that he was sorry to find him unwell.

"I am fatigued, much fatigued," said Walsingham. "May I inquire after Miss Stanhope?"

"The ladies are in the next room," said Douglass: "if you are disinclined for claret, we had better follow them."

"Although very anxious to see Miss Stanhope, I cannot refuse one glass of wine, for I feel almost unable to speak. There is," he continued, "Captain Stanhope, a great likeness between your sister and yourself—I could have named you as her bro-

ther in any place.—Now, Douglass, I am ready to follow you—and the faster you move, the better it will please an anxious lover."

The ladies all received him well; even Julia was glad to see him, for it relieved Amelia's mind, and made her regret that Walsingham had not arrived half an hour sooner, and silenced the impertinence of that horrible stranger. "What can have fatigued you so?" asked Amelia.

"More than I can well explain," replied Walsingham. "I have been obliged to relinquish my intended visit to my father, on account of the present disturbances, with which I am little interested. They are most serious; indeed, I expect that to-morrow will see Paris in a state of absolute revolution; and I came here to-night, stealing a few moments from a most important meeting, in kind regard to Mrs. Douglass and to yourself. What I propose is more painful to myself than to any; for who can bear to propose a separation from the object of his love?—Amelia, my dearest!" he whispered, "do you think you can persuade your sister to leave Paris in an hour?"

"Leave Paris, Mr. Walsingham! What can this mean—to what end do you make this proposition?"

"For her—yours—your brother's—all your safety: it is no secret, and I will tell it aloud. Mrs. Douglass, with your permission I will close this door and that window, and beg of you to listen to me attentively." Margaret looked up.—"After a duty to Amelia in my present visit, I am anxious about yourself and child. You must leave Paris in an hour's time; nay, don't start—your welfare is my welfare. I venture to disclose a secret which would, if discovered, mar a great work. To-morrow the streets of Paris will flow with blood—an organised revolution, which will withstand even the bayonets of the French troops, is arranged; and when once the frenzy of the French nation is let loose, we cannot tell how far murder may advance. You have a child—an only child; the danger is most imminent;—before I came here, I got your passports viséed for Calais; here they are: if you are prudent, order your horses at once. I tell you that after midnight you could not pass a barrier; you will be hemmed in—there will be no retreat."

"Surely, Mr. Walsigham," said Stanhope, "the British minister is a sufficient protection for the British subject?"

"Doubtless," continued Walsingham, "from an overt act of the government; but from a lawless set of demoralised ruffians, whose hands will reek with the blood of their country-

men, who can protect you? Men may remain and brave the danger, but for women to place themselves in such a position is unpardonable. I know not, Miss Stanhope, if my wishes are likely much to influence you; but if you regard me with the affection I regard yourself, you will use your voice in my argument, and urge Mrs. Douglass to avail herself of the present moment, and escape a danger which it would be criminal in her to await. Surely in this proposition you will do me the credit to believe that I am actuated only by a wish to render you a service, and that I impose upon myself the greater punishment in thus being separated, if only for a week, from Miss Stanhope. Captain Stanhope, may I claim one moment's conversation with you in private? I will leave Douglass to talk over my apparently hasty proposition, whilst to you I make a declaration more consonant with the best feelings of my heart."

So well had Walsingham from long practice schooled himself in the art of deception, that the frank and manly Stanhope was completely blinded by the apparent openness of his manner: he nodded a cheerful assent to Walsingham's proposition; and in the room where he had dined, Stanhope heard a repetition of the vows already made to his sister, and an earnest hope that no obstruction would be placed to his marriage.

Stanhope asked if Sir William's consent had been obtained; to which question he was answered, that Sir William was so fatigued with his journey as to be unable to leave his bed; but that to-morrow, if an opportunity occurred, his father should be apprised of the son's intentions, and a reconciliation established through the medium of Amelia: "For," added this Lothario, "who could see her and not covet such an addition to any family?"

Stanhope, silenced if not satisfied by this avowal and explanation, turned the conversation to the threatened revolution, without for a moment pledging himself to support Walsingham's cause: he had some misgivings, from Testy's hints, that his future brother-in-law's character was rather doubtful on some points; and yet his open, candid manner greatly disarmed Stanhope.

"I am inclined, very much inclined, to support your proposition about removing the ladies; but I own I should myself leave Paris with considerable regret. I am scarcely within the barrier of the city, before a revolution commences: we soldiers, Mr. Walsingham, are ashamed to fly because a few shots may be fired."

"A few shots," interrupted Walsingham, "would not induce me to make the suggestion I have made; but you cannot but be aware that if once the mob become the assailants, no woman will be safe from outrage. It is for your wife's sake—for her personal beauty will soon attract attention,—for Amelia's, for Mrs. Douglass's sake,—that I am so urgent. Remember what I tell you, Captain Stanhope: from the instant the first shot is fired and the alarm raised, it is useless to attempt a retreat, for the post-office will supply no horses; and the worthy ragamuffins who splutter about liberty, but cannot comprehend its meaning, will make free with your carriages, luggage, and women. I have no more to say on the subject—I have done all that I can do. My servant will remain here to forward your wishes; and I take my leave now, earnestly hoping that to-morrow you will have no occasion to regret having neglected my advice."

Walsingham now returned to his victim and the ladies. In vain he gave Douglass hints that he wished to speak to him in private: Douglass was for once satisfied with his loss: he neither took the hint nor proposed cards, but seemed impatient and reserved. In the mean time, the buzz of human voices increased outside; ever and anon a rush was distinctly audible; whilst in the calm which occurred between the deep maledictions of the populace and their vehement cheers, the old revolutionary songs struck upon the ear.

"That," said Walsingham, "is one of the worst signs of all. Years have passed since those songs have been publicly sung in the street, or rehearsed *sotto voce* in the salon. I think less of the clamour of these nimble-tongued people than the music; for once set Frenchmen to sing, and, carried away by the enthusiasm which invariably occurs, they rush headlong into mischief without the restraint of reason. You see," he continued, "how the whole mob have joined in the chorus—how they scream, rather than sing, '*Aux armes, citoyens! formez vos bataillons!* Depend upon it, that sudden ebullition will not easily be quelled."

In vain did Walsingham try every means in his power to effect his principal object of withdrawing the whole party from Paris: the very noise and confusion was a strong inducement to keep the women from hazarding a retreat through such moving masses of men; and Walsingham, finding all his efforts vain, withdrew himself. As he passed the outer gate, he whispered to his servant to remain and watch, and to give him the earliest

intelligence of his friend's departure. He had not, however, advanced two steps before he was run violently against by a man, who cried out, "Starboard a little, shipmate, next time, and don't come stem on in that manner! I'm blessed if you hav'n't stove in my figure-head and loosened some of my head-rails!—Ah, d—— all you Parleywous put together!—a thick-headed set of lubbers, who can't talk English, although we have thrashed you enough to make you scholars.—There, tip us your flipper; will you have a glass of grog, old Monseer Jigamaree?"

Walsingham by no means relishing the reception, answered in English with a very polite refusal, and was soon lost in the mob.

"I'm blowed," said the elegant valet in top-boots, "if that voice does not sound worse upon my ear, than 'Hands, reef topsails,' of a squally night. I'll just overhaul him a bit." But Jack's resolution after his soliloquy came too late: Walsingham was lost in the great stream of human nature which continued to flow from the Palais Royal and Place de la Bourse, to empty itself, or to diverge in different directions along the Boulevards. Indeed, the valet had hard work, as he said, to weather the corner of the *porte-cochère* and get into his anchorage at the hotel.

When he attended his master to explain his occupations, and duty done, he was in a high state of excitement; so much so, indeed, as to warrant the suspicion that he had been splicing the main brace; for all his master could get out of him was, "That's him, just as sure as grog ahoy at one bell!" Continued Jack to himself as he took his master's boots, "I know his voice as well as the first-lieutenant's: and as for his walk, it's just as regular as the sentry's at the cabin-door. By the piper! if ever I range up alongside of him again, I'm mistaken if I don't bore an eyelet-hole in his carcass, big enough for a reef point to go through!"

"What is the matter with you, Jenkins?" said Stanhope: "are you drunk, or stupid, or both?"

"It's him, just as sure as the purser's steward will clap his thumb in the liquor-measure!" replied Jack.

"Who?" said Stanhope.

"Him," said Jack. "And if I cruise about until daylight, I'll find him out; so while you turn in, I'll turn out and look out." Upon which he banged the door and was in search of the stranger.

Walsingham had reached his own apartments in safety ; and after going through his evening practice just as assiduously and as cautiously as if he had been employed cheating the unwary, he threw himself back on his chair, and commenced a very laudable but far from religious abuse of Testy. "He crosses my path every where—at every step I stumble against him. What could he have told these fools ? If I had succeeded to-night, he might have raved until his tongue had swollen. They must leave Paris, or I must :—and that last is not probable," he continued, musing. "I am so far committed, that I cannot extricate myself; and I do not admire the cool, determined manner of the brother. Besides, Douglass has much more money ; and I allow the bird to fly away, not unplucked, it is true, but still with many a golden feather. It is a bad business, but I must await events ; so now to complete my great work, which will immortalise and enrich me. I will have but one in the secret—my bosom friend the Count Von Rosendal." Here Walsingham ceased his murmurings, and having provided himself with pen, ink, and paper, began to mark a piece of ruled paper in the following manner :—

	Animal.	Vegetable.	Mineral.	Man.	Woman.	Child.
Animal. . .	King.	Queen.	Knave.	Ace.	Ten.	Nine.
Vegetable.	King and one trump.	King and two trumps.	King and three trumps.	King and four trumps.	Eight of trumps.	Seven of trumps.
Mineral. .	Queen and one trump.	Queen and two trumps.	Queen and three trumps.	Queen and four trumps.	No trump whatever.	No court card whatever.
Man. . . .	Knave and one trump.	Knave and two trumps.	Knave and three trumps.	Knave and four trumps.	King and queen of trumps.	King and knave of trumps.
Woman. .	King and ace of trumps.	Queen and knave of trumps.	Queen and ace of trumps.	Knave and ace of trumps.	Ace and one trump.	Ace and two trumps.
Child. . . .	Ace and three trumps.	Ace and four trumps.	Propose.	Don't give cards.	Don't propose.	Play trumps.

"I think—Ah, Rosendal, you are come to the moment! Here is my new plan; it must succeed. Now listen, and remember, the first-named thing or being denotes the horizontal line in which the answer is to be found; the second, the perpendicular lines. Thus, supposing you want to inform me 'not to give cards,' you, after betting a five-franc piece against me, would of course look over my opponent's cards and then turn to a person who is known strictly *honourable*—never mind the term, my worthy German; honour and dishonour are merely words, and all we require is honour amongst *ourselves*, we need not use the general monosyllable. You would, in low accents just sufficient to reach my ears whilst I am pondering what to do, and my adversary is 'proposing,' relate that 'a beautiful child was nearly killed by a man, who drove his cab over it, or against it.' Here you see, my worthy German, that the child marks the lower line, and that the man marks the fourth perpendicular space; and there you find, 'Do not give cards.' By your silence I should infer that I was to give cards.—Stop; I know what you are going to say, Rosendal, just as well as if you uttered it;—you were going to remark, that the eternal talking would not do amongst people of our avocation; it is only fools we must find, or innocent old gabies, who play in public rooms—there you may chatter. Now, I propose to try this plan upon my bosom friend Douglass: he has just got a brother-in-law over, who is one of those strict, honourable, upright men, who like conversation, and who are so blind as to the dishonesty of the world, that they do not believe in pick-pockets, and think a new coat cannot conceal a doubtful person. We must learn the table by heart, and practice it to-morrow at Madame la Rose's: she has always one or two old fools who weary out life in playing for francs. But mind, the paper must be destroyed: like free-masons, we must not commit any thing to writing. I dare say we have both learned more unprofitable lessons, and harder to be remembered, at school.—Now let us practise. 'That is a beautiful emerald, count: I wonder you do not give it to your wife!'"

"No trump whatever," answered the count.

"All right, my dear count: you see how easy it is to turn words into gold. Again: 'My horse has thrown my groom.'"

"The ace."

"Good, my worthy pupil, good!—never did man instruct a more willing scholar. You know the principle; the effort of memory is nothing.—By the way, I have a new mode of turning

the king—easy to do when a man is a little hazy. Here is the king of spades at the bottom; now it's at the top: remark how I shuffle ten cards over it, and no more. Now cut—*sauter le coup*, my worthy count. There's the king of spades in all his royal majesty. I'm quite pleased with my discoveries! To-morrow I will get Douglass here at three o'clock; you will come in accidentally, and I will arrange with one or two others to drop in; and then I'm mistaken if we do not talk of old Jason and the Golden Fleece afterwards. What a great blessing is an inventive genius—a creative mind!—Come, count, a cigar and to bed: cold water, clear heads, steady hands, watchful eyes, placid countenances, are all as requisite to our success as smooth tongues, courteous manners, honied words. To be what we wish to be, we must be walking specimens of Lord Chesterfield's gentlemen. Curse those fellows shouting their villanous revolutionary songs! they are never going to bed. Take a copy of this, count, and after you have said your prayers, repeat it over, place it under your pillow, rehearse it to-morrow as your morning's orisons, then destroy it. Good night to you—I'm to bed, to dream of riches and a victim."

The worthy couple parted, and Walsingham retired to his bed, but not to sleep, not to fall into a total oblivion of all the world, and to rise refreshed and reinvigorated to go through the labours of the coming day,—but to feel all the stings of remorse—to startle at every sound which accidentally was occasioned—to feel the coward's palpitating heart—if the furniture cracked, to dread the approach of any living object in the dark—to quail at the very thought of death—to fear the present and dread the future. Then, again, the apprehension that the police might trace him, or that some more cowardly cur than himself might betray him;—then in the rear came virtuous resolutions—a determination, after he had accumulated more money, of a peaceful retirement in some country place, under another name, taken of course for a fortune left by a maternal uncle—giving alms with a liberal hand, and going down gently into the grave amidst the lamentations of the poor and the blessing of the religious.

Walsingham, in all his disturbed slumbers, never thought much of Amelia; he never intended to marry her; and if he failed in his worst intentions, he could easily retire to another lodging, and wait concealed until the travellers should have departed. He wanted but one week's respite—only one week more to reap the golden harvest. He was safe as to Sir William Walsingham: that poor old man was fast sinking into the grave,

attended by two doctors assisting nature in her gradual course, unable almost to speak, and strictly prohibited from any conversation or any excitement. This our hero had ascertained; all his visions therefore wore a favourable aspect—for he had but one intention, which was to win, or rather to cheat the man who had received him as a guest, and been deceived in him from the advice which was the cloak of his guilt, and which, in all cases, when given against public play, was only to give Walsingham a better opportunity of making more in private.

CHAPTER XI.

Tuesday morning, the 27th of July, was heralded in by songs from the populace; whilst several of the deputies, who had met overnight, watched with impatience for that dawn which was to muster the many together. Great indeed had been the dismay of those legislators, who saw by their unwarrantable act the confusion which must necessarily follow: the storm had been created, and who was to still it?

The French, ever zealous to maintain their rights, seemed all to have taken but one view of these melancholy instances of royal weakness. The laws had received their deathblow from the hand which had confirmed them; and that nation so long the fear of the greater part of Europe was not likely tamely to submit to a violation of its rights and privileges.

Throughout the whole of Paris, boys might be heard screaming in defiance of the soldiers, or the warning voice of the police, "*Aux armes! aux armes!*" whilst those grown to manhood thundered back the words and applauded the sentiment. Still no hostile act was committed. Groups of the people assembled; and there might be seen the expressive glance of the eye, the firm tread of the foot, the compressed motion of the lip, which generally accompany a resolution of acting;—then the hurried communication to which all listened—the fierce gesticulations which all practised.

In the mean time, as the day grew more distinct, the crowds more considerably increased. The manufactories, the printing

offices, and many of the principal shops in the great thoroughfares, kept their windows closed, and refused to admit their usual workpeople: these contributed to swell the numbers of the different groups who had taken up positions in the public places and principal squares, and where the principal orators were tending to inflame the public mind by exchanging mutual sentiments, all tending to blazon forth the grievances and common wrongs to which they had been subjected, and, after breathing defiance to all authority which should attempt to uphold such abrogation of the law, were persuading their attentive listeners to swear rather to die than allow the chains to be riveted which tyranny had prepared; whilst others, elevated on chairs, read aloud to the already exasperated multitude the protest of the editors of the liberal newspapers. This last document was vehemently applauded, and Paris was in a state of insubordination bordering on absolute revolution.

Mrs. Douglass, when she awoke from a troubled sleep, heard the wild hurrahs of the wilder mob, and, looking from her window, saw the crowds rushing towards the Boulevards. She was quite aware that all the usual business of the lower classes was finished, if ever begun, for that day, and that it would be quite in vain to attempt to move. As the noise increased, fear communicated itself to all in the house; the affrighted females ran from room to room, and both Douglass and Stanhope appealed to their reason and their courage in vain. All were now clamorous to depart but Amelia: no sudden shout startled her into apprehension; the greater the danger, the more she desired to share it; and at last she boldly declared that she would not leave Paris without Walsingham left it also. It was quite plain that she was desperately in love; and, like all young ladies with a romantic turn of mind, she was resolved to share every hazard with her lover, and not to leave this scene of danger without he was in security.

At breakfast little was demolished but words: all the women spoke at once; and out of five persons they had but one listener, and that a very indifferent one: for whenever Walsingham's name was mentioned, Amelia at once began to defend his character, or to point out that he had recommended the course, when security was certain, which now every one was anxious to adopt but herself; that throughout he had been the friend of the family, and deserved a better fate than being suspected by one, and depreciated by the other.

When the din of words had a little subsided, reason came

into play. Some time must necessarily elapse before the carriages could be packed, but it was resolved that packed they should be, and the horses ordered by five o'clock in the evening; thus giving ample time to clear all the barriers before dark, and leave the travellers on the high road to Calais. No one was more clamorous for this line of conduct than Mrs. Douglass: she had in the morning believed it unsafe to move, but seeing that the mob did little besides abuse the king and his ministers, people little spared in such commotions,—that no one appeared armed, although all shouted "*Aux armes!*" and that occasionally a carriage passed without interruption, or that gendarmes walked without molestation, she gladly availed herself of apparent neutrality between both parties to withdraw her husband from Paris, in which she foresaw that he might, by every little subterfuge, continue his gaming propensities. Nor did she feel any apprehensions for her child: men seldom become so infuriated as to wreak their vengeance upon infants.

This being determined, it was requisite to apprise Walsingham of their intentions; for they could not carry away Amelia without giving notice to her lover, and soliciting his advice. It was resolved that Douglass should instantly call and invite him to be present and take his farewell of Amelia—that lady having commenced a series of sighs, which, after passing through the several stages, arrives ultimately at hysterics.

On Douglass's arriving at Walsingham's, he was alarmed at finding him apparently very unwell and in bed. He delivered his message; and although Walsingham expressed the greatest grief and the most earnest desire to pay his last visit, yet the pain was so intense that he despaired of success.

"What can be the matter with you, Walsingham?" Douglass began. "You left us in good—in excellent health last night; and to-day I find you unable to rise to see her who is to be your wife, when she may be absent for months to come."

"I am very, very ill," replied the hypocrite: "a kind of shivering attacked me last evening—in the night I became feverish, and now I experience so great a lassitude that I am almost unable to converse. You are right to leave Paris, my dear Douglass; a little estrangement from that sink of iniquity, the Salon, will be of great service to you: when you are away from the neighbourhood of that pandemonium, you will learn to exist without its excitement. How very faint I feel!"

Douglass immediately offered some water which stood near the bed; and on Walsingham's reclining on his pillow and clos-

ing his eyes as if overcome by exhaustion, he rose to depart; but the sick man beckoned him to be seated, and after one or two gaspings for breath, he continued, "I am better now; Douglass, give me your hand—you must be careful not to mention my sudden indisposition to Amelia. You must say that on your calling you found I had gone to my father's, who is ill—very ill indeed; that I was expected home at three o'clock, at which time, my dear fellow, perhaps you will call again. I dare say I shall then be able to mention my wish and intentions better than at present. You will call about that time, Douglass?"

"Certainly, Walsingham, I will be punctual. In the mean time, I recommend you to get some sleep. Stanhope will be anxious to see you, and I can bring him with me."

"No, Douglass, do not bring him. I shall, I dare say, be able at that time to get to your house: however, at that hour we can see. If I am sufficiently strong to stand without giddiness, Amelia shall not leave Paris without my seeing her and arranging a speedy meeting.—Do not let me detain you longer now; you are wanted at home, and I feel disposed to sleep."

Douglass shook him by the hand; and then, walking silently and cautiously, he closed the door and returned home. No sooner was he clear of the room than Walsingham jumped up perfectly well and in high spirits; he despatched his servant, whose cautious vigilance had given him the first intimation of the probable departure of the Douglasses, to his companion in iniquity, Rosendal, urging him to be punctual, and explaining his manner of proceeding. He then learnt his lesson most carefully by heart; and after satisfying himself of his being perfect, he sat down in his arm-chair, practised all his arts of legerdemain, then took a dice-box, known under the name of a doctor, and amused himself dropping the dice carefully in, by which method any number may be thrown; so that no game is more dangerous to play than backgammon or hazard, and the unwary more sure of being plundered than at any game in which dice are used. His manual exercise finished, he began to calculate his gains; for he was now a man of fortune,—his debts all paid, his credit high, and still more in perspective, although his victim was about to leave Paris.

Time ever flies quickly when the mind is employed. The large cathedral clock which stood on his mantel-piece struck half-past two; he then concealed all the implements of his art, placed a Bible and another religious book by his side, and lay

down on his bed, having first dressed himself. His countenance, at the best of times haggard, looked sufficiently pallid to deceive a person of more observation than Douglass,—and Walsingham anxiously awaited his arrival. His plan was well laid, and he thought the unfortunate man sure of being entangled in the mesh so artfully spread to ensnare him. The count was the first in the field; he was a quarter of an hour before his time. Gamesters are mostly so; they never let an opportunity slip—they are ever watchful; and Cerberus below is not more vigilant or careful as to whom he lets pass into the Devil's dominions, than are these vagabonds, who, not having the courage of highway-robbers, loiter in corners watching in reality whom they may devour.

The new plan by which Douglass was to be robbed was practised and found to answer uncommonly well. Both parties had good memories; and when memory is directed to only one object, it soon retains its lesson. By three o'clock Douglass and Stanhope both arrived. The latter was far from being captivated with the appearance of Walsingham: there seemed under the outward show of honour some lurking mischief—there was a restless watchfulness, an uneasiness, whenever the eyes met; and whilst Walsingham appeared thoughtful as to an answer expected from him, and kept his head towards the ground, there was a careful vigilance which always watched his companion. Stanhope, accustomed to command men, had noticed this as a sure sign of low cunning or consummate cowardice; he regarded all Walsingham's words as mere tinsel to cover greater defects, and was one of the many instances of common sense being much more valuable than flimsy ability. Before he visited Walsingham, he had called at the house of Sir William: he was denied admittance—the old man was very ill and quite unable to receive any visiters; the servant said that Sir William's son was expected, but that as yet he believed he had not arrived in Paris; —and, unsatisfactory as this was, it was all he could glean. At once Stanhope determined that there was a mystery about Walsingham; and he resolved upon fathoming it before he allowed the marriage to be proceeded upon.

Walsingham received him with the air and manner of a gentleman; nor was Stanhope less courteous. The invalid complained much of pain, but mentioned his being rather faint from the operation of the toilet, and that he was reclining to overcome the fatigue. The count most pathetically inquired after his friend's health, and was evidently so well tutored that he was

not likely to leave the room. The conversation was chiefly led by the count, who talked in fearful strains of the approaching crisis: he wondered how any foreigners could remain in Paris when death would be busy and very indiscriminate, and regretted for Walsingham that his severe indisposition would leave him partially at the mercy of the mob.

When this run of words was concluded, Stanhope, who had impatiently waited for a comma in the count's volubility, spoke to Walsingham—mentioned his having called at his father's, and of the ignorance of the servant as to his being in Paris, which ill accorded with the conversation of yesterday. Walsingham, accustomed to such surprises, answered coolly, and it was doubtless the desire of the medical attendant that his father should not be agitated at all; and consequently he had been denied admittance, and his father not apprised of his visit.

"It is useless our conversation now upon a very particular point," continued Stanhope: "we leave Paris to-night. You will find me at Dover should any serious riots occur in France; there I expect your love will lead you, and there we can make all arrangements. Amelia was anxious to see you."

"And if I can move, I will yet see her," interrupted the hypocrite.

"Move, *mon cher!*" interrupted the count. "If you do, you had better be measured for your coffin before you start."

Douglass, who really believed Walsingham in every point strictly honourable, implored him not to risk his valuable life, and persuaded Stanhope to leave Walsingham to the repose he required. The count was the only one who seemed astonished at the hasty departure; but a quiet glance from the sick man made him understand that all the night's labour in refreshing memory was for one day useless. Stanhope shook him warmly by the hand, for he was not quick to condemn; and such is the strange composition of man, that even Donglass wished him a speedy recovery, and another and better prospect than a sick bed.

They parted; the count watched them from the windows of the entresol; and no sooner was the coast declared clear, than Walsingham was ready to have ridden thirty miles in a contrary direction. It was requisite before he ventured in public to ascertain their departure; and at five o'clock the gratifying news was announced that the whole covey, as Walsingham named them, had flown.

Previous to this, the riots began to assume a more serious

aspect. In the gardens of the Tuileries, men were to be seen on chairs, reading aloud and commenting upon the Ordonnances; whilst the listeners, easily excited, roared out against their rulers who thus sought to enslave them. It is reported that one who thus occupied a chair as a rostrum was interrupted by the police and told to desist, as he was sowing discord amongst the people. "I only," replied the witty Frenchman, "blow the trumpet: if you dislike the notes, you must find fault with the composer." A shout of applause followed this display of wit; and the police was hustled away, and told to seize upon the authors of the sedition, and not those who merely read the words of a government act. The dense crowd which thronged the Palais Royal rendered all approach to that quarter impracticable; and in this kingdom within a kingdom, the better class of tradespeople pushed forward to spout out their abhorrence of the acts.

Although in the gardens of the Tuileries, the Place Vendôme, and the Palais Royal, great crowds had assembled, and many spoke out freely, yet there was no demonstration of any armed opposition to the decree of the government. But very different was the scene at the different barriers: here, in the low cabarets, the lowest orders congregated; but at each place there were one or two people who inflamed the mob, already half intoxicated. "The only way," continued one of these promoters of discord, "is to erect a barricade through which no soul in Paris shall pass: every one shall be bound to the common cause, and those, you know, who are not for us are against us, and we will soon take a proper vengeance upon them. "A barricade—a barricade!" was shouted with as much perseverance as the cry of "*Aux armes!*" had been; the stones which formed the pavement were instantly loosened and thrown up in heaps, and the road rendered impassable; every man as he worked joined in the chorus of the Marseillaise Hymn; and the soldiery who were stationed at the guard-houses being too few to interrupt the proceedings, were content with watching them: and thus, in a very few minutes, some carts had been seized—some omnibuses and fiacres upset—the road perfectly destroyed, and a very effectual barrier placed upon this outlet. By four o'clock the riots became more serious; the military and the gendarmerie cleared by force the Palais Royal and shut the gates; but it was merely driving the mob from one place to another; they all kept together, and if they retired, it was to condense themselves more closely. They were still unarmed; and they busily thought of

the best manner of providing themselves with those requisites without which all opposition would be fruitless. All passage through the lower part of the Rue St. Honoré and the Rue Richelieu was completely impeded by the immense mass of people, who could not have opened a sufficient space to allow a vehicle to pass. By degrees the numbers increased: and the military also appeared in stronger force; and although they clamoured for the people to disperse, and exhibited their swords in a menacing position, they were disregarded and hooted. This led to the first charge of cavalry upon the unarmed mob; and by four o'clock in the afternoon, the mob had become so far organised as to resist the frequent charges.

It was now an open fight; before six o'clock a fusillade had commenced on the side of the soldiery; and owing to the immense crowds which formed at the lower end of the Rue des Bons Enfans and the Palais Royal, many lives were sacrificed without a prospect of successful opposition. So desultory was the firing, and so incautious the soldiers, who have since declared that they endeavoured merely to scare the mob by firing over them, that two women who were busied about their domestic affairs were shot in their own houses.

The first death was the signal for a general opposition;—reconciliation had been tried in vain—barricades were thrown up in all the principal streets, and Paris had revolted.

CHAPTER XII.

The noise and tumult had greatly increased. Douglass and Stanhope, mutually fearful of the event, began to hasten their departure; but they waited in vain for the post-horses. Douglass had been sufficiently long in Paris to know how very easily even French postilions may be excited, either by punch or a revolution, and therefore, without further delay, he put the horses he had hired to his carriage; and Stanhope meeting a pair of fiacre animals, released from their everlasting load by the kindness of the barricade builders, enticed the drivers by a heavy reward, and soon found his vehicle slowly ascending the Boulevards, following close behind that of his brother-in-law, and making their way through the different groups, who seeing the carriage advance, allowed it to proceed without interruption.

Even Amelia's love was quieted by the excitement before her eyes. As they approached the Porte St. Denis, the mob became a little more savage in appearance, and some words reached the ears of Douglass neither gentle nor genteel in their import. At last, after walking the horses the whole way, they turned towards the arch of St. Denis, and drove through it: but here was an end to all their hopes—the road was, as before stated, perfectly impassable, and all hopes of escape frustrated.

"We must return instantly," said Douglass, "and get housed before it gets worse." The order was given, but not obeyed. The mob, anxious to render their barricade more secure, seized the horses and unharnassed them, but not without a violent resistance on the part of the sailor valet, who, swearing he would fight as many Frenchmen as could stand between Paris and Dover, flew upon the foremost man and knocked him down. A violent scuffle ensued, which ended in the perfect discomfiture of poor Jack, who, when he was sufficiently recovered from the kicks and cuffs he had received after being floored, found his master's carriage hemmed in by paving-stones, a fixture; whilst the ladies, shrieking with fear and apprehension of every dan-

ger, clung to the arms of their husbands, and endeavoured to force them to a quicker pace to gain some security. They were ultimately lodged in the Grand Turc, a small house more used as a coffee-house to the Jardin Turc than an inn; whilst Jack, seeing that no attempt was made to seize the carriage as a prize, and that the cargo remained untouched, took up a position on the roof, resolved not to leave the wreck until it went to pieces. Stanhope waved, and Douglass roared to him;—it was quite useless; he had been educated as a seaman, and he was resolved to save the cargo or go to pieces with the hull. He clambered on the roof, and did nothing but whistle "Come, cheer up my lads, 'tis to glory we steer," and clap his knuckles to his tongue, in order to make a blow sharper. The more the mob increased, the more he cheered; and the Frenchmen who had witnessed his defence of his master's property took a liking to him. There he sat growling and grumbling, a youth not more than seventeen, hurling defiance at a mob, and taunting them with all the bad French he could muster.

Such was the state of affairs at six o'clock; Paris was then in open revolt. All overtures made by the leading men of the popular party, in order to avoid the copious flow of blood which would eventually follow, were thwarted by the Duke of Ragusa, who having been invested with the chief command of Paris, with strict orders how to act, felt himself, however disinclined, obliged to urge the war he appeared to deprecate; for when Monsieur Lafitte represented in glowing language the deplorable state of the capital—that blood was flowing in all directions,—that musketry reverberated at every corner,—that Paris was in a state of revolution, and that the deputies held the Duke of Ragusa as responsible for the fatal consequences likely to occur,—the marshal coolly replied, "Military honour is obedience." Upon which Lafitte answered, "And civil honour is not to massacre the citizens."

"What conditions, sir," continued the marshal, "do you propose?"

"The repeal of the illegal Ordonnances of July 27, the dismissal of ministers, and the convocation of the Chambers on the 23d of August."

The marshal here remarked that a citizen might join without dishonour in these propositions, but that as a soldier he had received his orders and should obey them. But," he added, "the Prince de Polignac is near at hand—I will go and ask him myself."

In a quarter of an hour the duke returned: "Gentlemen," he said, "the prince considers that the nature of the conditions proposed renders a conference useless."

"There is then a civil war," said Lafitte.

The marshal bowed; the conference was over—the chance of reconciliation lost.

Towards seven o'clock the scene in the Palais Royal became, if possible, more animated. A regiment of the line was marched into the Rue St. Honoré, towards the Place du Palais Royal, for the purpose of dispersing the people, who, far from viewing this hostile array with alarm, greeted the soldiers with acclamations of joy. The officers instantly perceived the effect this had on their men, doubted much if they were sufficiently determined to obey the orders likely to be given. General de Walsh viewed it in the same manner; and gave directions for this, the 5th regiment, to retire and make way for the Garde Royale.

The fifth regiment accordingly withdrew; and the Garde Royale advanced, followed by a division of Lancers, the trumpets of which regiment sounded a charge. The notes were familiar to all; the crowd saw their own countrymen advancing —their impatient steeds clattering along the street—their lances glittering as the horsemen couched them. As the Garde Royale came forward a few paces in advance, the cry of the women resounded; whilst the tiny voice of the infant as it was nearly crushed by the moving mass of men, fearful of being trampled upon, was heard above the advancing din. In vain was all attempt at a retreat; the mass was condensed—those farther off were struggling to get nearer—those nearest eager to escape. The fatal order was given,—the soldier obeyed the word which had often, under their great general, led them to conquest;—the charge was heard—the infantry poured in their fire upon the people, and the Lancers dashed forward and murdered the helpless.

To offer resistance was useless—the bravest could not have acted; and the undisciplined mob, after a fruitless shower of stones, which only tended to infuriate and could not materially injure the soldier, rushed pell-mell along the Rue St. Honoré; whilst the groans of the wounded and the dying—the curses and heavy maledictions of those who could find shelter—the cries of the flying, and the shrieks of the women, followed the soldiers as they, observing the confusion of their enemies, pursued their bloody route, cutting down those within reach of

their swords, or piercing those who crouched down to avoid the untimely end. Not one poor wretch, who, perhaps led by curiosity to the scene, and who, seeing the forthcoming storm, ineffectually endeavoured to avoid it, escaped. The Lancers' wanton ferocity was untameable; they dug their pikes through the cringing carcass, and spurred their horses over the mangled bodies. Those who still lingered in life, as these unfeeling wretches retired, were spared the pain of reviving nature; the Gendarmes and the Royal Guard gave the *coup de grace* to their sufferings, and the gutters of the Rue St. Honoré overflowed with the blood of Parisians.

Short was this triumph. The people, availing themselves of the narrow streets and turnings, escaped in great numbers, and, as their enemies retired, again formed in the Place du Palais Royal. In their way they had provided themselves with arms; and boldly they stood when the Royal Guard again returned to their posts. There was no longer the military order to fire; the Guard, astonished at the collected mass, again opened a heavy and destructive fire: it was returned by a shower of stones, tiles, sticks, and, lastly, by fire-arms. But what availed this useless demonstration of bravery?—the steady discipline of the Guard soon overcame every effort of the mob; as each charge succeeded the last, the crowd grew less and less dense; one shout, one cheer, one further advance took place; the mob, cut into in all directions, only added to the slaughter by the impatient haste to escape; the bayonets could not err, so crowded was the retreating mass; and once again the Royal Guard, overcome with the pastime of slaughter, drew breath in momentary security, the mob having after almost superhuman bravery withdrawn, whilst reiterated volleys were with savage pleasure poured into the flying masses.

The blood of both parties was now properly heated to insure a continuance of slaughter: to animate the citizens, words were plentiful, rewards liberally offered; but none had the effect equal to the method pursued by a baker's workman, who, seizing the mutilated carcass of a woman, of which many were plentifully spread upon the street, carried it on his shoulders, shouting to all to bear witness how savagely their countrymen had murdered their citizens. Unsubdued by the weight, he carried the corpse to the foot of the statue of Louis XIV. in the Place des Victoires: he then addressed the crowd in strong and energetic language; he pointed to their murdered countrywoman; and, after expatiating on the horrid cruelty which had already cover-

ed one of the streets with the dead, he pointed to the corpse, and in a deep stern voice added, "Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!" The crowd caught the tone, and re-echoed the desire; the word "Vengeance!" was heard above all noises; and a rush was made by some to stain their handkerchiefs in the blood, that they might wave it as a banner to cheer forward the brave bands now uniting in the great struggle.

No sooner did the speaker perceive that his willing listeners were wound up to desperation, than he again seized the corpse and carried it to the military post at the Bank; he laid it down before the soldiers; and as they with eager curiosity pressed forward to know the import of this unusual visit, a finger was pointed to the mangled body, and these words were addressed to them: "Look! see how your comrades treat our wives and sisters!—Will you—can you, as men, imitate so bad an example?" The soldiers shrunk back ashamed; the mob grew more violent; whilst curses were heard from both parties, accusing the government of all the disasters which were come upon them.

The long day of July at last began to grow to a close, and Paris was, in spite of the disorders, in some order. The lamps were lit, but these were soon extinguished; a gang of about one hundred issued from the Porte St. Denis, and, in the midst of graver scenes, betook themselves to the employment of breaking every lamp and every window from which a light issued; and this amusement they pursued down the whole of the Boulevards, the Rue Montmartre, and the Rue St. Honoré, leaving those great streets and their outlets in perfect darkness. They then returned to their various cabarets, and heated their already warm imaginations with deep potations of wine.

Thus closed the evening of the 27th; whilst the night was spent, not in sleep or in repose, but in activity to prepare for the morrow. Each man had become associated with a certain number who occupied a specified position, and here each had bound himself to repair at dawn of day, and to try how far dauntless enthusiasm and deep sense of injury could sustain them against disciplined battalions, supported by cannon and cavalry, commanded by generals of distinguished courage and experience. One only determination prevailed,—to stand their ground in the maintenance of their rights and liberties, or to perish on the spot selected for the scene of strife.

At the Café Turc a scene of unusual excitement prevailed. The ladies found themselves prisoners and unable to depart.

Twice had Stanhope, in spite of the earnest, and what might be reckoned more astonishing, active efforts of his wife, been to the Porte St. Denis. He found himself by no means impeded, and in no manner insulted. The crowds still continued dense; but he walked through without interruption, and soon gained the barricade. Here he found that many other carriages had been taken to form this impediment to the actions of the cavalry; and after numerous unsuccessful efforts, he gained his own vehicle, on the summit of which was perched Jack, keeping, as he said, a bright look-out upon the squadron. He reported that every thing was safe—that he had received more than his allowance of provisions and wine from the purser's steward in the house—and that no attempt had been made to take command of the ship, but that every thing was conducted in the most officer-like manner; but that every cart was capsized which came near the anchorage, and that every carriage was forced to join the squadron.

"If that is the case, John," said Stanhope, "you had better come home with me, and you can return again afterwards. I want you to see where we live, so that in the event of your having any thing to report, you may know our residence. Have you been on the carriage all this while?"

"Not quite, sir," replied John, "I saw a bit of a spree; all hands took to dowsing the glims, so I just lent a hand to obey the master-at-arms' order, and kicked a hole in one or two of the French purser's lanterns. They are a rum set of people, sure*ly*."

"Why so, John?" said Stanhope, as they elbowed their way through the crowd, which now had become much thinner, and who seemed to understand Jack as he called out "Scaldings!"

"Why, sir, you see, I was at the masthead looking out, when up steps the very chap I knocked down. He had got a bottle under his arm, and a roll of baccy in his hand. Well, as I had knocked him down once, I thought the least I could do was to help him up now; so I lands him all safe in the crow's nest; and says I, 'What cheer, mate?'

"'Ah, ah, *oui*,' said he.

"'All right,' said I; for, do you see, sir, I understood his lingo well. He meant by the 'ah, ah,' that he had got the stuff; and the *oui*, he meant, for both of us, in course.'

"'Woulez-wous?' says he.

"'Well,' says I to myself, 'he means that bottle for some outside lining, and he calls it wool—so here goes;' and says I,

'Will I?—ah, to be sure I will;' so I takes the bottle, and says I, 'Here goes for a fillip to loosen my throat.'

"'Ah, ah,' said the chap, 'Louis-Philippe, *bon, bon!*' and he gets upon the roof of the carriage and makes a hullabaloo; upon which all hands tipple away for the fillip, and they gives three cheers for the honour of the cause.—The sooner I get back to keep a good look-out the better; for although these gentlemen seem honourable enough at present, yet they may turn round and try the handicraft system, and walk off with the luggage. I hope missus ain't frightened, sir?"

"No," said Stanhope; "she continues pretty indifferent to the scene; but she complains that the noise makes her head ache."

"I'm blessed, sir, if there won't be something more ache than heads, if this goes on."

By this time they had elbowed their way to the Café Turc, the garden of which was crowded by the citizens, who formed small groups where a table was not convenient, or disengaged, and forthwith began to speak of their complaints against the government. There was no steady, prudent man to check the current of the discourse; every one was animated by a strong desire to do some deed which should render his name notorious amongst the citizens. No one talked of peace, or of reconciliation—all burned for war and revenge. Many of the people there assembled had seen the mutilated bodies of their companions kicked with savage indignity into the gutters, the waters in which were tinged with the blood: these men, some furious from wounds received, shouted their sentiments with Gallic rapidity; whilst the young and the ardent caught the enthusiasm of those older than themselves, and, raising their shrill voices, as they lifted the glass brimming with *vin ordinaire*, shrieked out, "*Vive la république!—aux armes! aux armes!*"

At one corner, and mounted on a rickety table which but barely supported the tottering orator, stood an old man, his hair silvered with age and long service. This veteran had fought under Napoleon, and was one of those fortunate men who withstood the biting colds of the north, and made one of the miserable remnants of that grand army. He had not escaped the Russians unscarred, and was now, with his left arm bare, and showing the scars of former services, inviting his listeners to be prepared for the morrow. "Comrades," he said, "the hour is at hand when we must either present our necks to the guillotine, or show our bosoms to our foes. To tamely submit to be

crushed by a tyrant is cowardice—boldly to stand forward for our rights and liberties is noble. We, who have fought under the great emperor, know how little to value the fire of soldiers in a close town: here their cavalry cannot act, if we are prompt and cut down those useless trees which line the Boulevards, and under which some one or two of the Parisian idlers may gossip over a newspaper, or sit for half a sous under their shade. Down with them, my comrades, lay them across the road—pull up the pavement, and thus make a barricade over which no horse can leap, no cannon be drawn; then in vain may the soldiers advance with fixed bayonets; behind this barrier we will destroy those who obey the orders of a tyrant and a bigot. To work, my comrades!—this arm is yet strong enough to wield an axe,—to work, and let us show our enemies that the soldiers of Napoleon know how to defend a city, as well as to charge a battalion." Three cheers followed the conclusion of the old orator's harangue, and the trees were shortly felled.

CHAPTER XIII.

Both Mrs. Douglass and Mrs. Stanhope began to be seriously alarmed; but Amelia delighted in the riot: as long as the tumult continued, so long, she well knew, she must remain in Paris. The absence of Walsingham alone caused her pain; for she, with the frankness of character and innocence of mind which throughout her life had been manifested, candidly admitted how sincerely, how affectionately she loved the man who had declared a mutual attachment, and oftentimes pressed her brother and Douglass to repair to his house and inform him of their situation. To this Stanhope objected, for he had great misgivings about Walsingham; and Douglass was unable to comply with his favourite's request, for his wife objected to being left one moment. Jack, the valet, would have faced the Garde Royale to have complied with Amelia's wishes; but he, in the first place, was ignorant of the street, and secondly, was wanted to guard the carriage. The post was of no use; the letters, of course, could not be delivered in a city which was declared in a state of siege, and in which a civil war raged in all its unnatural fury.

Well was the appeal of the old man answered. Boys of twelve years of age joined with those of riper years in the work of destruction—the trees which tended so much to improve the appearance of the Boulevards were soon felled; the pavement was taken up; whilst omnibuses, fiacres, carriages, carts, and wheel-barrows were placed under the protection of the trees, the intervals being filled up with paving-stones. The whole of Paris was in an excitement without parallel, and it was evident that the morning would produce a dissipation of the thunder-cloud which hung like a funeral pall over the city.

In the mean time, Walsingham was in raptures at the news of the actual departure of the Stanhopes and of the Douglasses; he had foreseen that his day of triumph was drawing to a close, and that his victim, sickened by his last loss at the Salon, would have relinquished play for ever, or only have dabbled in so

paltry a manner as would ill repay a gamester for the time he sacrificed. Again, the unfortunate arrival of Sir William Walsingham, the actual knowledge that Stanhope had endeavoured to gain admission into the old man's presence, was not at all calculated to cool all alarms; and the certainty that Testy was on terms of intimacy with the family made him rejoice that Amelia, for whom he never entertained the least real affection, was, with the whole batch of his acquaintances, removed from the capital.

Although, had Walsingham been opposed face to face with an adversary, he might have borne himself with sufficient bravery not to be disgraced, yet he was far from being a brave man—his conscience was his greatest foe—and not unfrequently would he start from his sleep, and tremble like a child, if a rat stole across the room, or the furniture, warped by the heat, cracked as it expanded: but in the tumult and the roar of revolution, his spirit had risen to its proper pitch, and having borrowed resolution and enthusiasm from words clamorously shouted by the populace, he became wound up to join those who contended for their rights. Overjoyed at finding himself, comparatively speaking, a rich man—certainly independent, he felt himself buoyed up by hopes to which he had long been a stranger. No sooner had his servant announced the departure, than the sick man, who had been unable to rise even to see her he professed to love, left his house, and, joining the nearest mob, listened to the furious speeches of those who, in spite of all the horror and tyranny it had engendered but a few years back, shouted for another revolution.

The mob, pleased at seeing an Englishman who was vehement in his praises of the one party, and heavy in his denunciation of the other, received him as a friend and as a citizen; and when Walsingham made known his determination to be with them at daylight on the morrow, armed and willing to assist, a shout was heard in favour of England, because one of her unworthy sons was willing to enlist himself in the quarrels of France. Excited beyond prudence, he pledged himself again and again to lend his assistance to the glorious cause, and returned to his room, to count over his riches, to keep up by practice his lightness of hand, and to read that book, the doctrines of which were upheld by his voice, but never operated on his heart.

It was now, whilst the shouts from without would have disturbed a braver man, that this gamester might have been seen

coolly calculating all his gains, and making virtuous resolutions never to hazard again the chance of pauperism by public play; but as long as he could increase it by private gaming, assisted by his worthy associate the count, he saw no objection to its continuance.

Independent as he felt himself now, he had sense enough not to wish to return to all the privations he had known. He could trust to his quickness for securing dice at hazard: he was in possession of "doctors,"—boxes made in so peculiar a manner that the dice never turn in them; and he still carried in his pocket "despatches," dice with no sevens, aces, deuce-ace, or twelve upon them, and only used to rob a half-drunken gamester of his all, by a continuation of "doubles or quits," where the caster calling seven for the main, can never by any possibility lose; this reserve guard to his advancement he still retained; but as far as a gamester could feel awed by a solemn declaration to forego gaming in public, he felt a sincerity of intention which he wound up by the old saying, "Vice may be practised, but the public eye must not be offended." In the midst of the revolutionary songs which were sung in every street, Walsingham the gamester *said his prayers* and retired to rest.

His morning slumbers were disturbed before the day had broken, by the tolling of the tocsin of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. This appeal to the citizens to be awake and at their respective posts was soon answered by the bells of the other churches; the silence of the night had been disturbed before the morning's gleam had come, and that was welcomed by one simultaneous shout of "Liberté ou mort!—aux armes! aux armes!" Drums now reverberated through all the city; on every side the preparation for actual war was visible; whilst the young, the old, the sick, the infirm, joined together to give the final stroke to their glorious work,—to carry the war into the very palace of their king, and to shake off the shackles which tyranny had imposed, and place their country, to the astonished eyes of all Europe, as a free and a constitutional state.

On the other hand, the troops were not idle. The sound of the tocsin was to them a summons to arms: accustomed to obey the orders of their officers, and having been carefully kept apart from their enraged countrymen, they drew up in a line with the firm resolution of maintaining their honour as sol-

diers, and of blindly and implicitly being subservient to military discipline.

As yet no actually offensive operations had begun, for an hour elapsed before the sound of the musket gave notice that the work of slaughter had commenced. The noise of the breaking up of the pavement in the vicinity of the palace soon convinced the Duc de Raguse of the necessity of commencing operations, and of at once, if possible, quelling the tumult before these offensive barricades could be completed. The church clock of St. Roch announced the half hour after four, as the Swiss troops, warned of the commencement of a barricade at the extremity of the Rue des Poulies, which is a narrow small street, leading from the Rue St. Honoré to the Louvre, opened a murderous fire upon the citizens. Then was the last tie broken; then was the challenge of strength thrown; then was to be seen if disciplined troops, with every means and appliances of war at command, could crush the determination of an undisciplined people to be free.

In the stillness of the morning, the sound was audible throughout Paris; the large bell of Notre Dame responded as it were to the war-cry, and the church of Christ was made instrumental to summon men to murder and to war. Then were all the worst passions of human nature let loose: then might be heard the groans of the wounded, the cries of the women, and the loud shout for vengeance; then, even above the noise and continued roll of musketry, resounded the misunderstood word "*liberté*," whilst gangs of youngsters, thirsting to dig a dagger in a soldier's breast, ran shouting through the streets to call those who had not obeyed the first summons to arms.

The fire of the Swiss troops was returned from a window, in order to draw their attention from the barricade, or, at any rate, to divide the fire; but although successful in this attempt, numbers fell under the well-directed musketry of the soldiers, and the completion of the work was retarded, although not relinquished. As each man fell, cries of vengeance were heard, every weapon was shaken in defiance at their enemies, and crowds of people were ready to replace those who had fallen on the barricade. Amongst these Walsingham was conspicuous: all the natural courage of the man, which fear of detection had subdued, now broke loose; he was foremost in every danger, and no voice was louder than his, as he called to those around to follow him to revenge, and protect their comrades. Animated by the cheers, the populace worked hard in spite of

the galling fire; but to such an extent was it impeded, that eleven o'clock had struck before it was completed; and scarcely had it been finished, when one of the leaders, who had worked beside Walsingham, and who was of almost gigantic stature, received a mortal wound, and as he fell, shouted out, in the last effort of his lungs, "Vive la Nation!"

The death of this man, who had never ceased to animate his companions as he ventured with unflinching bravery his life, drew forth loud shouts of vengeance;—a rush, in all the confusion of an undisciplined horde when animated by revenge and encouraged by example, followed. The Swiss, astonished at this simultaneous attack, were panic-stricken at the approach of such overpowering numbers rushing headlong amongst them unscared by the death-dealing volleys which saluted them, and which left almost a barrier of the dead, for the living to leap over. They retreated before the dense mass of infuriated citizens, and sought shelter in the Tuileries.

The whole of Paris was now involved in smoke: the cannon of the regular troops was awfully re-echoed from the surrounding heights; whilst a deep dense cloud hung over the devoted city, darkening the very daylight. Many and many were the charges made by the Royal Guard up the Rue Castiglione, through the Place Vendôme and Rue de la Paix, to the Boulevards. One moment, the houses would be occupied, to the horror of its female occupants, by men, loosely clad and black with powder, who rushed to the windows and commenced a spirited fire, and who passed unnoticed charms which at other times would have attracted unpleasant observation: but now, such was the chivalry of the cause, that no woman was insulted, no plunder committed; every man, in reality, seemed anxious for the success of his cause, and the worst part of society became honourable in their present calling.

No sooner would this party have gained the houses, than the Garde Royale would dislodge them. There was no quarter given; the *canaille*, as the insolent soldiery termed those who were struggling for their freedom, were bayoneted without remorse if they could not effect their escape. The windows again became occupied by the regular troops; and thus the slaughter was continued with unabated fury.

Barricades having been erected in all parts of the town, the troops of the line found it a useless sacrifice of life to storm these hundred defences: for in gaining one, they gained no permanent advantage; they were assailed from every window, and

every advance was checked by a barricade which seemed to have been the work of years, rather than the active measure of one night. Amidst this scene of destruction—this savage slaughter, the tocsin's awful sound might be heard through the momentary cessation of musketry; whilst the shrill sound of the boy and the deep-toned voice of the man unceasingly called, "Aux armes! aux armes!—liberté ou mort!"

The Duke de Raguse, on the preceding evening, being well aware that arms alone would settle the dispute, had been active in his defence of the Tuileries and the Louvre. The latter place became a kind of citadel, and its connexion with the former was of the first importance,—for had it been taken, the troops had no retreat but out of the metropolis. The position was good; on one side, the Seine rendered it unassailable but by the bridges, and these were easily defended; on the other side, the streets were narrow, and commanded. The citizens had, therefore, only the Place St. Germain l'Auxerrois on the eastern front of the palace, and the Gardens of the Tuileries, which were entirely occupied by the regular troops, on the western side. From the former position an attack was made by the citizens, commanded by General Gerard. They were but indifferently armed; although the National Guards had reorganised themselves, and came provided with the weapon they had carried under the dominion of Napoleon. But very different was the situation of the two Swiss regiments which garrisoned the Louvre: they were stationed in detachments, some in the Garden of the *Infanta*, whilst others were posted at the different windows and outlets, from which in comparative security they could steadily take aim;—they were besides amply provided with field-pieces, and had ammunition more than enough for a protracted defence. Every one stood ready: it was the place most requisite in Paris to defend,—indeed it might be termed the very camp or citadel of the regular troops. We purpose giving this attack, as it is blended in some degree with Walsingham, and is necessary to the developement of his history.

The first grand object of General Gerard, was to gain possession of the houses in the vicinity and in the Place St. Germain l'Auxerrois, and to hold every position within view and gunshot of the object of attack; but the church itself afforded the most commanding situation, as from its numerous loop-holes, its towers, and its galleries, they overlooked the square of the Louvre, and could pour down steady and well-directed fires upon the unprotected troops. This grand object was obtained without

much loss. Walsingham was seen on the gallery waving to others to follow; whilst each seemed anxious to displace his neighbour, more openly to share the danger, and more readily to engage the foe.

The fire was opened: it was like one continued roll of the drum, for there was no interval of time of longer duration than between the beat, in the discharge of the musketry. The cannon of the regular troops thundered back an answer; whilst the Swiss troops, from their different stations, opened a steady and destructive fire. On the summit of the church, the tricoloured flag was displayed; whilst on the Tuileries might be seen hanging down its staff,—for the weather was calm and sultry,—the white emblem of the Bourbons. Volley after volley, and cannon after cannon, continued their awful destruction: but on the one side the dead were replaced from the numbers anxious to participate in this attack; whilst on the other, every shot which took effect weakened the numbers of the regular troops. It soon became evident that the fire from the Louvre was considerably slackened. Shout after shout encouraged the citizens; whilst their opponents, gradually diminishing in numbers, felt as each cheer reached them that the courage of the one party was increasing as the feebleness of the other became more manifest.

It was nearly noon, the heat oppressive beyond imagination, and human nature might have sought repose without fatigue to have prompted it;—but in the fury of excitement who feels fatigue? The cry was now to storm the Louvre, and Walsingham descended from the gallery of the church to be one even of the forlorn hope. A reinforcement of two hundred men had just arrived: the crowds of people from the barricade in the Rue des Poulies continued to swell the numbers of the besiegers, and the cry to assault the gates became general. Three columns were soon marshalled: one came by the Pont des Arts, another by the Quai de l'Ecole, and the third, by the colonnade, from the Place St. Germain l'Auxerrois. The Swiss saw the gathering storm, and manfully stood to oppose it: it was one grand sea of human life, increasing as it reached its destination until it broke in all its fury on the gate of the Louvre. Dense as the mass was, and steady as the Swiss stood and fired, yet the slaughter was comparatively small; it served more to quicken the pace of the besiegers than to retard it, and, in spite of all opposition, they reached the wished-for gate. One volley, the last heard in that quarter, laid many a gallant fellow asleep; the

rest, shouting "En avant!" broke through all impediments, and rushed into the court of the Louvre, shouting "Vive la Charte!"

Walsingham was one of the foremost, and escaped even this attack. He seemed to bear a charmed life: he was in front in every attack, but the ball of the enemy passed him by as if unwilling to rid the earth of a being who until this day possessed not a friend but one—and that a woman—in the world, and took as its victim another by whom a family was supported, and through whose generous exertions the poor and the needy were supplied.

The first column had advanced with more regularity than the others; and when they rushed into the court, they found themselves propelled forward by the other two, which came pell-mell in its rear, increasing its numbers as its footsteps advanced. Gallantly did the Swiss troops retire: they never showed their backs to the foe, but retired showing a full and noble front, separating according to their orders, to reinforce the gates which fronted the Rue du Coq, and ultimately, as that defence was carried, retiring in good order to the Place du Carrousel, within the iron railway which encloses the space in front of the Tuileries, they again stood, to protect the palace. Weakened as they were, and dispirited by the courageous advance of those they had as soldiers been taught to despise, the assailants, flushed with conquest, at every moment increasing in numbers, animated by shouts, and conscious of the rectitude of their cause, advanced to this last stronghold, inferior indeed to the Louvre, but still capable of great resistance. Here the Duc de Raguse commanded in person. The rush of the citizens overpowered the almost exhausted Swiss troops, who now, seized with a panic, turned round and fled, carrying with them the gallant Duke, who in vain attempted to rally them. He had brought forward the whole of his force to cover the retreat; but the retreat had become a flight: the mass bore their general through the palace under the tower of the clock, and keeping up a straggling and almost useless fire, they hurried through the Gardens of the Tuileries, to make a momentary halt in the Place Louis XV. The palace was now taken: although some troops in the Pavilion of Flora contested that part with admirable valour, it was useless contending when their comrades had flown. The lily of France was lowered, and the tricoloured flag was once more upon the signal-staff of the palace!

CHAPTER XIV.

The excitement was nearly over: the Tuileries had surrendered, the Duke de Raguse had evacuated Paris, and the capital was wrested from the king's authority.

Walsingham's eye would have again quailed before the glance of an honest man. He had embroiled himself in a quarrel in which he had no interest; he had served with his best endeavours those to whom he was a stranger—he had manifested the courage of an Englishman, and had not disgraced his country's fame for bravery and coolness. Slowly now he retraced his steps; the fire had ceased along the Rue Castiglione, and an uncomfortable calm prevailed.

On turning the corner of the Boulevards, he perceived several groups of men in conversation; they had piled their arms, as regular soldiers are accustomed to do when the fatigue of the day is over: it was a respite most earnestly desired, for hardly in the memory of a Parisian had a more sultry day occurred.

With a wish to ascertain the feelings of the party with whom he had associated himself, he listened with intense interest to their remarks upon the bravery of their comrades; nor was he displeased when he heard his own description given, and an animated burst of applause from all present as the relater of the event told of his gallant deeds at the Louvre.

"Well," said an old Frenchman, the sleeves of whose shirt was turned up above his elbows, and whose countenance confirmed him as a veteran soldier, "I wonder what we are to get for all this fighting?"

"Honour!" said one.

"Liberty!" said another.

"A glass of *vin ordinaire* and four sous each," said a third.

"Ay," said the first speaker, "we shall get all that, but no more; all the loaves and fishes will be divided amongst our present friends, who, when they have done with us, will denominate us the *canaille* again. Lafayette is already at the head of the National Guards; they will soon manufacture a king, for they

have some of the old stuff left yet: the rich and the great will be greater, and the poor and the labourer worse off than before: it is easy to get up a disturbance, but hard to quiet a revolutionary city. I have always remarked," continued the old fellow, "that when a man is rich, his riches are sure to increase; every one gives to him who does not require it, because it may ultimately serve for themselves:—the poor get poorer, and as strength fails, or sickness weakens, so their bad name increases, and they are called 'idle, dissolute, impertinent, intruding vagabonds.'"

"There must be some to rule," interrupted Walsingham, "and some to obey: if we were all to be equal, no one would stand sentinel at the Louvre."

"Bah!" interrupted the old revolutionist; "you are an Englishman, and would run half round Paris to get a nod from a nobleman. Go home; we can settle our disputes without the interference of foreigners."

Walsingham left the crowd, a shout of ridicule following his retreat. "And it is for this that I have ventured my life, and, having just become independent, perilled all my future prospects! Fool that I was to interfere in that which never concerned me! I am, or was, in the condition of all mercenary troops, shedding men's blood for money: at least, I could claim a remuneration,—perhaps get a piece of gold to dangle with a red riband from a button-hole, and dismissed as having been largely recompensed; and if I was starving, be told that I had served and been paid,—to go home, as the people in power could settle their own disputes. But all is over now, and in three days I shall roll over the streets in my cabriolet: my money I will instantly invest in the French funds,—they are appallingly low, but must recover,—and this shall be my last act of gaming. Those cursed Stanhopes are, thank God, gone, and before they return I shall be far away, and try, under another name, another country."

Thus pondered Walsingham, as he slowly dragged his wearied footstep to his own apartment. There no one had intruded, and the room looked in the same order and neatness as when he foolishly rushed out to fight. He first quenched his burning thirst; and having thrown aside his outer garments, he laid down to rest. In a moment almost he was in a sound repose, and his ears, accustomed to the noise of musketry, which still in many parts of the city continued, never reminded him that the work of death was still going on.

Towards the Porte St. Denis, and on the Boulevards opposite the Café Turc, the ground had been hotly contested. A large party of the Gendarmerie had endeavoured to silence the murmurs of some of the most violent. Arms were unhesitatingly used by the popular party, and in self-defence the police had used their own. Of course, some lives were lost; and the low part of the populace, being quite unable to draw a distinction between justifiable defence and wanton cruelty, accused these miserable gendarmes of having barbarously murdered their companions. Some of the police who were wounded and fell, were most savagely bayoneted, or cut to pieces: and if at the Louvre a kind of patriotic fervour had been shown, at the Porte St. Denis there had been a worse feeling exhibited. There was at that point a kind of barbarous disposition to slaughter. The lower orders, who had been vomited forth from the cabarets in the neighbourhood, made light of the blood-shedding pastime; and as some poor fellow, who in the discharge of his duty had been surrounded, assailed, beaten down and killed, gave his last breath for all he held dear in life—his child, some low wanton joke was sported, and perhaps was the last human sound that fell upon the dying man's ear. This bad feeling got worse as it increased: it was confined, it is true, to a very few; but these few had full power to carry it into effect.

One of these scenes, which might appal a firmer heart than a woman's, was witnessed from the window of the Café Turc; and all the miseries which Walsingham had pictured on the night when he recommended their flight from Paris was apprehended. It arose from the gendarmes having solicited from the mob a cessation of hostilities for two hours, in order to come to some permanent treaty, which would prevent any further flow of blood. The populace, overcome more by the intense heat of the day than by the actual opposition of their enemies, were overjoyed at this overture, which they fondly imagined would end all the disturbances. They, therefore, after having quenched their thirst, stood in groups discussing the affairs of the day. Some boys climbed the arch of St. Denis, and placed a tricoloured flag thereon, waving their hats, and shouting out, "Vive la Nation!"

No sooner did the Gendarmes perceive this favourable opportunity than they resumed the attack upon the unarmed, unprepared citizens, and many were thus slaughtered. A rush was made at the arms by both parties; but they were seized by the unwounded men and discharged as the police advanced. A

savage retaliation now ensued: in vain the wounded soldier cried for mercy—the word was unknown; they were sacrificed, butchered without remorse and without feeling.

It was only at the Porte St. Denis that these atrocities were committed. The Swiss troops, who fired on the populace in the Place du Palais Royal in a similar manner, paid dearly for their treachery; but they fought with the intention of dying rather than surrendering, being fully impressed with the erroneous idea that their abandoning their arms would be the sure step to their murder. The citizens who fought in that quarter of the town were animated with a very different feeling,—murder or plunder was not their intention: and it is one of the most astonishing facts in that revolution, that the thirsty soldiers in many instances refused wine, which they could have procured without the smallest difficulty, and rather chose to continue under the sensation of thirst than quench it by any other means than water, more especially if the wine was to be procured by plunder.

This highly chivalrous feeling was not, however, universal. There must be some evil-disposed people in all cities, and these few availed themselves of the opportunity granted them by the confusion which prevailed.

The tumult was fast subsiding: it was three o'clock when Walsingham again quitted his house, and loitered up towards the Porte St. Denis, in order to trace the ruin which three days had caused the capital. All along the line of road, many people were collected, busy in congratulating each other in their escape: former disputes and petty grievances seemed reconciled by this revolution; people who had quarrelled for years shook hands and were made permanent friends; and Paris resembled one immense arena, where a population were assembled to swear eternal peace and happiness. Even Walsingham felt somewhat relieved in mind by this universal display of good feeling; he walked amongst them, smiled upon them, and joined his hand with many who were anxious to testify that several English had been foremost in the day's danger.

From one group he passed to another. Here the same good feeling, the same rejoicing existed; but as he neared the Porte St. Denis, he became sensible that a great change of character existed. Some who were most clamorous, and whose faces were sullen, seemed to add to intoxication a savage unrelenting disposition; and as he shunned this group to near another where the Marseillaise was sung in discordant rioting, he saw further

on a considerable confusion. Groups of people were discovered rushing with their arms to a place just beyond the Porte St. Denis. Two or three muskets were now heard, and this was followed by a more regular volley. Walsingham saw the tricoloured flag waving over the arch, and saw also from that edifice the smoke of fire arms. The English disposition to meddle in quarrels indifferent to them, caused him to quicken his pace. The firing elsewhere had ceased altogether, for the troops under the Duke de Raguse had retreated far beyond the Barrière de l'Etoile, and the other regiments of the line which had been stationed at different parts of the city had long since joined the popular party. Walsingham was perhaps animated by a generous disposition to save any further effusion of blood, and by mentioning how completely the soldiery had deserted the capital, to bridle the inclination of the few police left to any further opposition.

Seeing the crowd evidently in pursuit of some object, he stepped nimbly forward, when to his astonishment he saw the mob chasing one man, who by his dress he soon recognised to be a gendarme. The poor fellow was wounded, and was making this last attempt to save his life; whilst the infuriated people, most of whom were armed, called out to seize the reptile and fix him as a mark against the Porte St. Denis.

This scene had not escaped the party at the Café Turc; for as the firing had previous to this been partially suspended, the ladies, imitating others of their sex, and gathering courage by example, had without fear advanced to the windows. With intense interest they watched the termination of this affair. The rash man had in his uniform ventured from his lurking-place: he was instantly recognised; the revenge which was uppermost in the drunken minds of the mob prompted them to seize their arms, and the poor fellow, seeing their object, endeavoured, by stepping suddenly from side to side, to avoid the death he saw, when too late perhaps, to be almost inevitable. By his quickness he escaped the ill-directed shots, until one, a mere random fire, struck him in the leg,—he felt the wound, but struggled with the pain—the hounds were soon upon him, they seized him, and threw him on the ground.

"Let's all have a shot at him," said a youngster of about seventeen, who had been placed on the arch, and who had taken not one, but five or six shots at the flying enemy: "my brother is killed, and I will have revenge!"

"That's noble;" said another; "of course you shall have a

a shot at him. Let us place him with his back against the Porte St. Denis, and we will soon have blood for blood."

In drunken society, a hint is almost invariably taken; there is no folly a drunken man will not commit, and no crime of which he is not capable;—such is the penalty exacted for disgracing the human intellect, and of levelling man with the brute. No sooner was the horrid proposition made, than the victim's arms were lashed, and his legs secured against all escape. It required but little time to effect this. The poor fellow was then led to the arch, or rather dragged, and was placed upright against it.

"Hear me, my comrades," he said, "before you murder me. I only did my duty, which I was bound to do; why then do you seek to kill me, and leave one of your own countrywomen a widow, and three French boys fatherless?"

"My brother! give me back my brother you have murdered!" said the half-drunken lad, "and then we may listen to your nonsense. Stand out of the way, boys! I will soon send poor William a companion."

Stanhope and Douglass had both witnessed this sight, but the distance was too great to hear what was said; and John, who had kept a look-out from the mast-head of the coach, and had there remained perfectly indifferent to the shot which whistled by him, had, on seeing the capture of the gendarme, and observing that the fight was over, descended from his perch and joined the mob.

When the youngster had finished his speech and was preparing to take aim, the crowd opened on both sides, and between an avenue of human beings the little drunkard presented his musket.

"Avast heaving, shipmate!" said Jack, as he caught hold of the musket and pointed its muzzle aloft. "Avast heaving, I say! What! would you fire into an enemy after he had struck his colours, and you have secured the prize? D—n it! I did not think that people who could fight so well, would fire into a sinking craft!"

"Aha, Monsieur Jean Bull!—allez, allez, mon enfant!" roared the mob: about twenty of them caught hold of him and drew him out of the line of fire; whilst John kicked his adversaries, and whenever an arm became for a moment free, he made the best possible use of it in endeavouring to free himself.

It was now that the boy again raised his musket to fire, but

found his arm impeded by the presence of another stranger, who stood with the utmost composure right before the body of the pinioned gendarme. It was Walsingham.

The scene which had excited much attention from the Café Turc, was now becoming of intense interest. "It is him! it is him!" said Amelia, as she covered her eyes with her hands. "For God's sake save him! tell him where we are."

Stanhope, ever alive to do a good action, and perfectly heedless of any danger, in spite of Margaret's entreaties, who, when she found her husband likely to be embroiled, became more animated, seized his hat and rushed towards the spot. He passed his servant without recognising him; although he afterwards confessed that he heard some words which, however eager people are to repeat, could only have come from the grog-burnt throat of a sailor.

The blood of the mob being up, they were resolved to gain their point: there was a cry of—"Fire! why don't you fire!" from the people nearest the boy. "Never mind that fellow," said one: "what business has he there."

Stanhope heard this, and elbowed through the mob towards the boy, whilst Walsingham had turned round to liberate the prisoner. The clamour increased: the boy stood with the musket pointed towards the ground and in the act of raising; Stanhope seized it,—it went off at the moment its muzzle was level with Walsingham; the gendarme was seen again to run for his life, as a human form fell over the spot on which he had stood.

"There," said the boy; "that comes of interference! If you had not touched the musket, it never would have gone off, and that Englishman never would have been killed."

The report of the musket seemed a signal for releasing Jack, who, finding himself at liberty, ran towards the spot, and there found his master vainly endeavouring to carry the wounded man. Without looking attentively at the person he was about to serve, Jack seized Walsingham by the shoulders, whilst Stanhope lifted his legs, and they bore him through the crowd, who were now very eager to recover the man who had thus been most miraculously rescued, and allowed them to pass unmolested.

"You are in a great hurry to give yourself pain," said a voice, as Stanhope pushed through the crowd: "you had much better have let him die where he was."

Stanhope turned a hasty glance—it was Testy who spoke, and who was slowly following the wounded man.

"Assist us, Mr. Testy," said Stanhope.

"Certainly I will," replied the old man, "if you take him to any other place than where you are going. The experiment will be fatal one way or the other."

"We have no other place," said Stanhope hastily. "To what house could we take a wounded friend but our own?"

"You had better take him any where else, or leave such a friend to find people as worthy as himself to assist him. You are heaping coals of fire upon his head, and most religiously returning good for evil. I will not assist you—I will not lose sight of you—you cannot get out of Paris; but you may get to some hotel and leave him to the people of the house, who will, after all, be very much obliged to your family, as your brother-in-law's pilfered money will pay the doctor."

They were now at the Café Turc, and Testy stood still. Jack carried his burthen up stairs, assisted by his master, and they laid the wounded man upon a bed. The screams of the women had been plainly heard as Stanhope ascended the stairs, and he rushed instantly down below to relieve their apprehensions.

"He is not dead, Amelia,—he is not dead, I assure you!" as he forestalled the question she was about to ask. She threw her arms round her brother and blessed him for the timely interference, and would have disregarded all propriety, by attending the wounded man herself. The commands of Mrs. Douglass, the cold dissuasion of Margaret, the injunctions of Stanhope, were combated by this girl, who, having given her hand and heart to Walsingham, saw no impropriety in attending him as a nurse.

In the mean time, Testy was not idle; he had procured a surgeon, and was on his way back to the Café, urging the Frenchman to walk quicker, as the latter stopped every minute to give greater effect to his words, as he prophesied with the extent of his wisdom, that when revolutions began, the public peace was much disturbed, and that he foresaw in the future a slight continuance of the present state of affairs.

"Go to him," said Amelia to Stanhope,—"go to him, and let me hear the worst: and if in five minutes, by this slow-moving watch, you are not returned, nothing shall keep me from him. Would you have him die, and not remember me?—would you have him die, I say, and I not catch his last breath?"

Stanhope ascended the stairs—he opened the door, and, to

his astonishment, found his servant standing like a statue, his eyes fixed upon the pale and fainting countenance of Walsingham, his lips muttering—"By God, it's him! and d—me if I have not carried him!"

CHAPTER XV.

The French surgeon was like most of his countrymen in that profession—a good anatomist, a quick operator; he probed the wound, and instantly declared that it was not mortal. He was despatched, after dressing the wound, down stairs to the ladies to give the exact technical description of it; not one word of which, saving that no serious results were apprehended, could they understand.

Testy remained with Stanhope and his servant in the room. They all, with the exception of Jack, seemed anxious to attend upon Walsingham. One raised his head gently higher; and Testy, without making any remark, chafed his temples with eau de Cologne. Douglass also contributed as much as possible to alleviate the pain of the sufferer: but Jack stood still, his eyes fixed upon the features as they gradually resumed their usual appearance, as returning life animated the man.

"He is coming to," said Stanhope; "he breathes faintly again; but he has no strength to open his eyes."

"I hope," said Jack, "he's not broaching to yet, and that the life-lines are not cut asunder, for it's him, or I'm a Dutchman."

"Why, we know it's him," said Stanhope, pleased to see the recovery of the patient; "we know very well it's Mr. Walsingham: we did not want a ghost to come from its grave to tell us that."

"If the ghost did come, begging your honour's pardon," said Jack, "and told me that fellow was Mr. Walsingham, I'd knock it back to its hammock, if it had been buried sailor-fashion, and tell the dead gemman he lied like a horse, and was as false as a slippery side-rope; for if I'm John Jenkins"—(Walsingham appeared to start)—"and I never shipped a purser's name yet,

that fellow who is snivelling there, and afraid to die like a man, is *Cavendish.*"

A loud slap of Mr. Testy's hand upon his own knee followed the word, and the parties present might have heard "As right as a trivet: I think they will know him *now.*"

"Cavendish!" exclaimed Stanhope; whilst Douglass caught the same note, and ejaculated "*Cavendish!*"

Stanhope turned round to Testy; their eyes met—it was impossible to mistake the "Is it true?" of the one, and the cool affirmative of the other. He held his hands together, and raising them to Heaven, poured out his heart in saying—"My God! my God! what affliction is come upon us!"

Walsingham had heard every word; and short as the time was, it was sufficient for him to recover enough to speak.

"Hear me, sir," he began. "I feel my time is short now, and that Death will soon claim me. I have a load, a heavy load weighing me down—Don't look so on me," he continued, as he saw the sailor's eyes fixed upon him,—"and I will tell you all of myself before I die. Grant me this one request: let me recover a little more—leave me in quietness for an hour; and if my tongue can unburthen my mind, I will endeavour to regain one lost chance of Heaven, and not go down to the grave with a lie upon my lips.—Leave me."

Testy, Stanhope, and Douglass immediately prepared to leave the room; but Jack stood still. "I axes your pardon," he began, "but I'm blessed if I do leave the room!—you and I have a great account to settle, and it will take some time before the yards are square, and all the gear stopped up. The doctor said that you would weather the Devil this time; but it's my fault if you weather me. Here I'll stick—I won't budge an inch, not if all those vagabonds outside came to get you back to shoot you again. You belong to me; we are anchored now in the same roadstead; and if you slip your cable and make sail out of the window, why it's my look-out, and I sha'n't blame any one but myself. There,—you need not begin to try to humbug me; I won't say a word to stop your hailing Heaven, if you are so inclined; and if you can get up there with a clean bill of health and no quarantine, so much the better for you. But this is what I take the liberty of saying—'It's no use having any one rated as Devil to look after the ship's company of the World, if he does not catch you.'"

Having delivered himself of this oration, Jack took a chair and seated himself at the foot of the bed.

Testy smiled; and neither Douglass nor Stanhope could entirely keep their countenances at Jack's idea of the duty of the Devil. They left the room closing the door, whilst Jack just said as he last thought, "You had better bear a hand and set to work, my lad, for as your voice must be very strange up aloft, perhaps they may listen to it; you have not bothered them much with your prayers, so shoot ahead and save the tide;—I won't be a shoal in your way."

Walsingham turned his eyes away from the injured brother of an injured sister; whilst Jack never moved a muscle of his face, but kept his eyes fixed upon the wounded man, as a signal-man would at the mast-head of the admiral ship, when the stop of the flag was to be broken at eight o'clock in the morning. Not a word passed: one seemed lost in abstraction of thought; the other, pondering over revenge, and watchful to inflict it.

It required some good management and much consideration how to proceed. To have ventured into the salon below and at once proclaimed the discovery, would have been to have raised a storm none could have calmed. Testy, who was always thoughtful and possessed a thorough knowledge of the human mind, led his two companions into a small room; he took Stanhope familiarly by the sleeve, and jerking his elbow as usual against the side of his listener, began—

"I told you long ago you knew that man: you denied it. I told you," he continued addressing Douglass, "at that dinner at the Salon, about your system and your friend. I warned you both of the danger of bad company: it was unheeded. Now, if you can borrow wisdom from the experience of others, listen. You must remove instantly from this house: you must say the truth, that he is too unwell to be moved; but that you will leave a faithful friend to watch him—I mean that rough diamond in the top-boots; he does not seem much inclined to leave him. You may walk through Paris now as quietly as you could a month ago; and all the annoyance you can have to dread is perhaps the forced salutations of those heroes who now are upon stilts, merely to fall the heavier: but, above all things, mind how this discovery is hinted. I have been all my life studying human nature; and a man must rise very early to deceive me. Your sister loves that man passionately, else she would not have allowed her tears the other day at dinner to manifest her weakness. She will now be desperate—a wounded lover is much more dangerous than a sound one: besides, he risked his life for another—and she saw it. You must remove instantly."

"Mr. Testy," said Stanhope, "no man is under greater obligations than I am to you; and it relieves me much to express it."

"That's quite enough of that," interrupted Testy. "I hate expressions of gratitude; they seem to imply that one of the parties concerned has made a fool of himself."

Stanhope smiled and continued,—"You can answer me one question, and that one will decide in my mind my future conduct; for although I cannot look back upon that name without feelings of the most painful nature, yet, saving the gaming and the cheating, I can overlook that which, as a brother of the unfortunate girl, would have prompted me to commit a murder rather than to have overlooked an insult. Is that man the son of Sir William Walsingham?"

"Why, I will not make the devil blacker than he is. I knew him many years ago as Walsingham; I afterwards knew him as Cavendish, he having, according to his own account, taken that name for some property, which, I fancy, was won from a person of that name, and who thus living made him his heir. After a period of some years, he returned again as Walsingham,—Sir William not liking his son to take the name. It is a jumble, you see: but when people gamble and pilfer, they have as many names as play-actors; he may or he may not be that old man's son: but as he believes himself dying, and French surgeons generally give a flattering account of wounds at first, in all probability he will make friends with the world, and be for once acquainted with truth.—But it is idle wasting time here; the evening creeps on: remove your family to the Hôtel Chatham in the Rue Neuve St. Augustin. I will walk down with you and shake hands with the *canaille:* we will then return, and with long countenances warn him of his present perilous situation; hear his story; leave him to rot, or nourish him for matrimony. That's the go, Mr. Douglass."

"But what excuse," said Stanhope, "can we make for our sudden abandonment of the house?"

"This," said Testy:—"that to-night half Paris will be drunk with wine after the long sobriety of three days; they frequent places of this kind; and in a hotel such as I have named, the large gates are closed, and you are as quiet as in a country village in England."

The proposition, although made by Stanhope, backed by Douglass, and supported by Testy, was opposed by all the women. Amelia raved for her hero; and meeting Testy's eye,

her pretty lip curled with disdain as she said, "I presume it is your counsel that we leave a countryman who has almost sacrificed his own life in the brave defence of another's."

"I fancy, Miss Stanhope, we shall take care of your lover, and of you also: in another hour you would wish yourself far enough from the scene of riot, drunkenness, and debauchery which will take place here. Besides, as you seem the most violent to remain, I will just add, that nothing but a revolution could have justified your occupying the quarters you have taken up:—do you understand?"

"I will never leave the house until I have seen him. These stories are invented to serve some turn. I know you are all against him; but I will triumph over all."

"By Allah," said Testy, as he turned away, "she's a magnificent creature!"—spirit enough for a dragoon horse on a field-day, and as resolved as a Turkish executioner when he has a few heads to lop off before breakfast. She must not be sacrificed, and she must not be driven to despair."

Warmly was the point contested; but it seemed true what Testy said, that the women would make a great stand to do a good action, but would listen to reason when they had talked themselves into heroines. "Don't interrupt them," he said; "allow them to believe they guide where they do but follow. Wise men never swim against a current; and crows, when they find they can't make head against the wind, like wise birds, sit on the ground until the breeze subsides."

After a long altercation amongst themselves,—for Testy said nothing but "Just so—quite right,—clever woman,—throats cut—perhaps worse,—of course remain,"—they put on their bonnets, paid the bill, and walked off, old Testy giving his arm to Amelia, as both the other ladies imagined themselves only safe with their husbands.

It was a sight wonderfully interesting. The fatigued citizens who still held the different positions along the Boulevards were lying down seeking a moment's repose: here and there a woman was seen walking from man to man offering wine; whilst now and then a frantic mother might be seen calling for her child, and cursing him who had caused this flow of blood. The arch of the Porte St. Denis was discovered with the marks of shot,—windows were broken, trees felled, the pavement taken up,—and the whole line presented to the eye one mass of confusion, through which carts carrying the wounded sometimes crept slowly along, the groans of the poor fellows as the rough

vehicle jumbled over the stones startling the most indifferent. The dead had been removed; but there were many who, being slightly wounded, remained on the ground, seeking consolation from their companions.

Slowly did the party advance; and the fear which was at first evident, gave way as they increased their distance from the Café Turc. On several occasions where the mob had failed to observe the party, until they were obliged to request an opening to be made, these rough fellows, who had so well and so nobly fought the battle, lifted their hats in token of civility, and calling to their companions, removed any obstacle which impeded their advance. Testy, who spoke French admirably, made continual remarks most consonant with the feelings of the people; and not unfrequently he held out his hand, and was welcomed by those whose cause he appeared to advocate.

"Such is the world, Miss Stanhope," he remarked: "a little flattery is a very wholesome commodity, and he is a fool who opposes men's opinions when he is not in a position to maintain it."

"Do you then, Mr. Testy," asked Amelia, "make falsehood justifiable?"

"On many occasions it is requisite. There are many occasions in which truth, if told, would lead to destruction; and there is a vast difference between the wilful liar who detracts from the character of others, and the man who apparently countenances or approves an action for which he entertains the greatest contempt. For instance, supposing when that man said, 'What do you think of this great day's work?' I had replied that I thought them fools to pull down one dynasty to build another—that their credit as a nation would be hurt—that they would become greater slaves in the necessity of stopping all commotions which would grow out of this—and that they had allowed the streets of Paris to flow with some of its best blood to place one man in a position which would entail a life of labour and vexation, with the regicide's hand ever ready to plunge a dagger in his heart:—if I had said this, which I conscientiously believe to be the result of this foolish and bloody revolution, I should have been beaten and reviled, if by good luck I avoided a greater calamity. So remember me, Miss Stanhope, when you place your hands before your face to conceal your blushes, and answer evasively a plain and proper question."

"Mr. Testy," said Amelia, who had hardly listened to the

old man's wise saws and modern instances, "will you do me a favour?"

"Certainly," replied the strange being.

"Then promise to tell me exactly the state of Mr. Walsingham's wound; and if there is the slightest danger I implore you not to keep me a moment in ignorance of it."

"I will unburthen myself of my unwelcome news, be assured, provided you will promise to be guided by reason and discretion, and give me good cause to believe that you think men of my age cooler and more discreet than lively little ladies in love, who are likely to be mistaken by the outward show and tinsel appearance of men with an object to gain."

"How I hate you for the hint, Mr. Testy!"

"Pray don't," replied Testy; "for as women are always in extremes, you may suddenly convert the gall into honey, and kiss me in the streets."

"You seem to have a wretched opinion of our sex."

"Just the contrary: you are the best of beings—rather obstinate when in love, and rather foolish when opposed. You rarely take time to consider either of a proposition of marriage, or the choice of a friend; but you are exempt from the accusation in regard to the selection of a dress, or of a female attendant. That's the plain unvarnished truth, which, if you are sensible, you would like to hear,—and if foolish, would be thrown away upon you. Here you are safe at your hotel; keep that little heart of yours quiet, it may yet have to beat with vexation. But, I trust, little confidence as I have in my own sex, that this man on whom you have lavished your affections may be cleansed of some of the foul aspersions which have been affixed to his name."

"You will see us properly housed, Mr. Testy," said Mrs. Douglass, "and make some of those little arrangements which prudence requires, and which we scarcely understand: and I hope, Mr. Testy, we may have more of your company and your advice,—the one having proved so pleasant, and the other so useful."

"Very much obliged indeed," said Testy rather sharply; "but I hate compliments,—and—"

"—Women," interrupted Amelia. "I beg leave to say," she continued, "that however kind Mr. Testy may have been in giving us his protection to this hotel, yet he was the one who forced us to leave Mr. Walsingham; for which I hate him—and there is no flattery in that."

"No," said Testy; "that is the best compliment you have yet paid me,—and you will yet live to pay me a better.—Now, Captain Stanhope, we had better return, as your Caliban might fall asleep, and his charge take himself off."

"I fancy," said Douglass, "the bird is hit too hard to run away."

"Do not be too certain of that," said Testy: "I have seen many a one fall apparently dead, and run half a mile. But let us return—the ladies are safe. I have already agreed for the apartments—rather exorbitant—but people securely lodged in a revolution must not grumble at a few francs more or less."

"I charge you, Mr. Testy," said Amelia, "not to forget your promise."

"I never forget a promise, Miss Stanhope.—Come along, my heroes; time flies, and so may our bird."

The three gentlemen now returned to the Café. They remarked the same occupation of the Boulevards by the citizens: the National Guards occasionally exhibited themselves in the uniform which had often been paraded under Napoleon; and there was in the whole scene something so animated, that notwithstanding the earnestness of one of the party, a considerable delay took place before they reached the house.

On entering the room, they beheld John seated in exactly the same position, his eyes fixed upon his prisoner, his gaze so steady that they might have doubted if he had ever even winked his eyes. Walsingham had kept his closed, but opened them when he heard Stanhope's voice.

Testy began the conversation by addressing John.

"Has the surgeon been here again?"

"Yes, sir," said John.

"What did he say?" continued Testy.

"I'm blessed if I know," said Jack; "but he jabbered away like a hunted monkey: and all I could make out was, that they were precious friends, and went on with 'Bless you! bless you!' (*blessure*) for about half an hour, and then shook hands, and I dare say would have kissed each other's dirty jowls if I had not kept my eyes upon them."

"How is he, John?" said Douglass. "Does he appear weak?"

"Very weak, sir, when it suits his own convenience: but when the doctor and him had done their jabber in this cursed outlandish lingo, my friend there wanted to weigh his anchors; but I just saved him the trouble, mooring him a little more securely, by lashing his small bower to my starboard flipper."

And here John showed them that he held one end of his handkerchief, the other being fastened to the left foot of the wounded man.

"Come, come," said Stanhope, "we must have no more of this. You had better go down and get something to eat, John: we will attend to Mr. Walsingham."

"You had better keep a sharp look-out, sir, or he'll be in the streets in a crack.—But mind me, sir," he continued, addressing Walsingham, "you and I have an account to settle; and I would have squared the yards with you long ago, only I don't think it like an English seaman to fire into a sinking craft. You won't lose sight of him, I hope; and when you are tired, I will relieve the watch."

Testy, whenever Jack referred to the attempted escape of Walsingham, kept digging his elbow into Stanhope's side; and once or twice hinted that wounded birds ran, as he had before mentioned. "But, now he is past frightening with any idea of death from his wound, you must," he continued in a low whisper, drawing Stanhope gradually out of the room,—"you must probe the wound yourself. Act firmly with him: do not compassionate—do not commiserate him. If he is able to speak, by God!" said Testy with more fervour than was usual, "make him speak.—And now to work. Preface your conversation with your just suspicions arising from your servant's knowledge of his former name. He has offered himself as your sister's husband: it is your duty to see she does not throw herself away upon a villain. But I am more afraid of Douglass than of yourself; let me tutor him, whilst you go and inquire what the doctor said of the wound."

Testy now drew Douglass aside, and began, "There is a little mystery about your first acquaintance with Walsingham. I think perhaps you had better make a clean bosom of that to Stanhope. I can see through it all in a moment; I am one of those men who sit on sofas and watch the company. I'll tell you a secret you know pretty well yourself: you never were at school with Walsingham in your life. Now mind and keep quiet, whilst we fish his history out of him."

CHAPTER XVI.

"I HOPE," said Stanhope in his usual mild and gentlemanly manner, "that your medical man has given you every consolation in his account of your wound."

Walsingham opened his eyes, which were directed to the vacant chair in which the servant sat: he seemed suddenly animated when he observed that his guard had actually left the room, and answered the question in a firm tone of voice, which quite convinced Testy that Walsingham was at his usual tricks, and out came the elbow,—for it was a kind of convulsive motion, such as is recorded of Nelson's stump whenever the great naval hero became agitated; and it was, perhaps, the only bad habit this sincere, old, excellent, and eccentric man possessed, excepting always his coat.

"I am in no danger," Walsingham began, "and could move even now: it is only a flesh-wound—the shot has passed through the fleshy part of the shoulder without touching the bone, and I feel a certain confidence that I shall in a few days be better. Let me advise you to avail yourself of the first opportunity of leaving Paris; for, rely upon it, the revolution and riot are but begun."

Testy, who stood at the door, saw through the motive: he was the only one not blinded by the especial forethought of Walsingham. "I think," he began, "there is very little apprehension now: the blood will run cooler after the copious bleeding; and if men are honourable during such excitement, there is little to apprehend from their calmer moments."

"Thank you kindly, Mr. Walsingham, for your kindness in regard to ourselves," said Stanhope; "but before we part, it is as well to clear up a few suspicions which have arisen in my mind from the exclamation of my servant, who, it seems, has known you before: he called you by the name of Cavendish, and Mr. Testy mentions that, some time since, you passed in Paris under the same appellation. It is my intention to leave Paris as soon as our carriage can be drawn from the barricade;

but I should ill perform my duty to my sister if, before I left, I did not endeavour to trace the history and the character of my future brother-in-law."

"You are right—very right, Mr. Stanhope," replied Walsingham, as a few drops of perspiration trickled down his face; "and I am sure I will willingly be the first to clear up any mystery: but the surgeon desired me carefully to abstain from any conversation which might agitate me; and I must say, the very suspicion you have mentioned is by no means calculated to make an honourable mind easy. You can delay this conversation until to-morrow, when I shall be stronger, for I feel now very unequal to the task."

"These French surgeons," said Testy, "know very little about gun-shot wounds. I had a first cousin who had exactly a similar wound to your own, and who died the first night after its infliction. Have you made your will?—if not, I dare say I may witness it without hazarding my legacy. Come, Walsingham, rally: if your life could be backed against death to-night, you would soon muster spirit enough to rattle the old box, and call your favourite main of nine."

"Why agitate me, Mr. Testy, by your unhandsome remarks, when you hazard my life?"

"You cannot be very bad when you can make so wretched a pun. A glass of water for the fainting man; and if you do not feel yourself well enough, we will leave sailor John at his post, and you can sleep in peace."

The very idea of the return of John was quite sufficient to rouse Walsingham, more especially as he was most thoroughly convinced that Testy knew he was not so weak or so languishing as he pretended to be. The easy drawl of Testy's manner—his reference to the Salon, and the glass of water, were incontestable proofs; for the old gentleman was known to be a most humane and attentive companion if real distress required consolation or rest.

"Come," said Testy, who watched Walsingham narrowly, and apparently read his thoughts, "we have no time to stand idling here: another rally might be made by the Duke de Raguse,—the Boulevards might become a Champ de Mars, and we might be shot in our return home. Captain Stanhope is come here for an explanation from you of certain parts of your life. I am his friend—his solicited friend to be a witness; and, independent of that, I have the common duty of us all to fulfil. Your poor father lies at the point of death, awaiting the arrival

of his son, whom he will perhaps bless and forgive: for there, thanks to the general goodness of mankind, only exists one man, and he was the architect of his own fortune and unenviable character, who could curse his only son night and morning, and who yet will die attended only by his mistress and his housemaid,—who would not forgive his son at his last gasp, and die reconciled to him, who perhaps had deserted him in life. I tell you, Mr. Walsingham, I myself will bear the account of your wound to your father, whose days are numbered; for he shall not go hence without being informed that you are in a state which, however flattering, may end fatally."

"To what Mr. Testy has said, Mr. Walsingham," began Stanhope, "I may add this: No sister of mine shall marry a man who hides himself behind a mask. I am aware of certain parts of your life, as you, from my name and family, must be well aware. Speak out, and do one act to reclaim yourself. Confess the truth whilst you live, for your life is uncertain,—and as becomes a man, and, I trust, a Christian, tell me who and what you are,—how through this life you have followed our family to plunder it, like a greedy Cossack after a retreating army,—give us yet one gleam of hope through the darkness of despair, and say you are the son of Sir William Walsingham."

"I cannot longer evade the question, and I feel I shall but imperfectly answer your question even by the recital of my life. This I will do: but I implore you not to judge of me too harshly, although I know that I deserve all the obloquy which man can shower upon me."

"That is all very good," interrupted Testy, "but of no earthly use to us. Begin, if you like, from the hour you were born, if you remember so far back; but go on straight ahead, as your watchman John would say, until you come to this bedroom, out of which, if you tell the truth, God grant you may remove; and if not, with the consent of the Devil, may you die. I dare say you have caught many a fish for him, and, of course, he will not be ungrateful.—Go on."

"I will," said Walsingham.—"I am," he began, "the son of Sir William Walsingham, now in Paris."

"Stop," said Testy: "are you sure you have not begun with as cursed a lie as ever came from a man who thought death out of the country."

"I deserve this," said Walsingham,—"I know I deserve it; for he who rarely spoke the truth in health, cannot be astonished if even his last word is doubted. I repeat, that I am the son of

that man,—his most unworthy—most guilty son. My age is only thirty-two; and yet I am well aware that sleepless nights, uneasy mind, and conscious cowardice have furrowed my cheeks and given me the haggard appearance of a sickly being at forty-five: my hair is gray, my sight impaired—"

"I doubt that," interrupted Testy.

"—My hand unsteady: yet I never drank myself into this prepature old age, nor occasioned it by excessive debauchery—"

"Hum," said Testy, as the sharp elbow rattled against Stanhope's side.

"—My health has been impaired by my mind, for that has never been at ease since I left my father's house. It is useless wearying myself or you with any account of my early life. From the first moment that I can remember, I was addicted to gaming; and now, as I may as well confess all, to cheating. It is said vice is progressive—that no man walks over the greensward of innocence to topple suddenly over the Tarpeian rock of crime, and sink into the Curtian gulf of infamy. In a man, it may be true; in a boy, perhaps erroneous. In all our pastimes, Honour was by me considered as a fool who unsuspectingly stood idle whilst Ingenuity picked his pocket. There is a thing called luck; but as Fortune never favoured me, I made up by cunning what was kept from me by that goddess. I was expelled a public school for a fault which I shall forbear to mention."

"D—n it!" said Testy; "had you no mother to teach you the path of honour, or no father to rebuke you for a fault?"

"Both," continued Walsingham; "but both too kind,—too filled with the sweetest dispositions to overlook the faults of an only son, severely to censure, or cruelly to condemn him. It is here I pause for a moment; the vices of the boy may be reclaimed by the rod of the master and the eye of the parent; and, though now,—for I feel some long-lost affection creeping over me, some calm as I unburthen my mind even to those who must despise me,—I feel a glow of love and affection to those who so loved me: I feel myself recalled to those days when advice was given from a mother's tongue, not in anger, but in prayer; when a father would look at me with affectionate fondness, and allow the tear of affection to start from his eye, as his voice would falter to rebuke me: and if I had through life felt but the one hundredth part of the gratitude I now feel, the name of Walsingham would never have been stained with crime, or I branded as an infamous character.

"I was twenty when my mother died. I was in the house, prepared for the event. It was strange the different feelings which by turns took possession of my mind: one instant I saw by her death the inestimable treasure I should lose; the next, an avaricious feeling would overcome all affection, and I saw myself the sure inheritor of my father's wealth; the large settlement made upon my mother must devolve upon myself, and thus in some degree place me in security,—for I knew my father's estate was not an entailed one,—he inherited his fortune from an uncle, and it came unshackled to him. At the last hour of my mother's life, her reason—her mind, was as healthy as in perfect health: the body had not contaminated that, which seems a thing apart, although occasionally shaken by epilepsy, or weakened by long sickness or suffering. She called me to her bedside, bade me kneel down, and blessed me. Do not, Mr. Stanhope, I implore you, rob me of my only consolation by discrediting me,—I wept like a child: to her words of advice I lent a ready ear: I kissed the cold clammy hand which had rested upon my head, as I offered up a prayer,—the first, the last ever offered in sincerity,—that her words might be profitable to me, and that God would bless my dying mother. She died. I will be candid in my confession: I felt as if some restraint was removed,—I felt freer to act—I felt that a watchful eye was closed. The long pageantry of folly which swells the funeral of the rich took place: the hired mourners—the greatest mockery of real woe, who stood outside our doors dressed in the livery of grief, laughed at some obscene jest, or feasted on the funeral baked meats:—my mother was conveyed to her grave; and as the coffin was slowly lowered into the vault beneath, I felt the heart-springs of affection burst through every restraint, and I wept as became a son who at that moment sincerely mourned his mother.

"My father, who had lived in fondest affection with his wife, felt her loss deeply. For days he scarcely spoke, and he kept within his park-walls for more than six months: all those who kindly inquired concerning him were refused admittance; the servants seemed to walk cautiously, lest they should disturb the quiet of the house; and it became to me the most wretched, the most lonely of all abodes.

"I solicited to be sent to college; my expulsion was a bar which my father's wealth could not overleap, and I was condemned to a private tutor. Here I first learnt the rudiments of that art which has ruined and retrieved me,—which led me into

the paths of crime, and which gave me the means of satisfying my vicious inclinations. Here I found vice ennobled: my tutor hallowed gaming by enshrining it as a classical accomplishment, and his rapture was unbounded when he read that loaded dice had been discovered in the ruins of Pompeii. My inclination accorded but too well with his own: when my father retired to his room, we played backgammon; it was for money,—and whenever the stakes rose, with my vehemence of temper, I invariably lost. As my father allowed me an ample allowance, I paid my debts of honour punctually; but I soon discovered that my progress in education was trifling, whilst my losses were excessive.

"The selection of this man was most unfortunate; but he came well recommended, and, in all probability, had he found me adverse to gaming, he would have discontinued his aim, and turned my mind to more healthy pursuits. Neither was this his only failing, or the only one in which he instructed his pupil; his general admiration of the sex led me, as his companion, to treat all with a levity ill suited to their virtues. I was now fairly in the vortex: I read only to give me greater power over the other sex—for fools are seldom successful, and I studied rather to defend vice than to protect virtue. Gaily now passed the days, in greater excitement passed the nights: I had only to express a wish, and my subservient tutor, who guided me skilfully, whilst I appeared to lead, contributed his utmost exertion to serve me.

"My father was soon convinced of my rapid advancement. A new and more lively conversation ensued: the classic ground which I had dug up to unbury the vices of the ancients was of use in showing how assiduously I had studied; and when I came of age, my father regarded me as a man likely to make a figure in the world, and one who had lost nothing in education by having been excluded from the Universities.

"The tutor, who had now got me fairly in his clutches,—for I had given some bills, the amount of which was far beyond my power to repay,—proposed to me that a tour on the Continent would finish my education: for after I was of age, I had solicited my father to retain this man, for whom, although his debtor, I felt a great regard. 'This proposition,' he said, 'must come from you, without my being consulted: and you can propose that I should accompany you. We can together tread the classic ground of the Latins, and contrive to mix pleasure and study in the trip.'

"The peace of 1815 had just been made secure; the road to Dover was thronged by the rich and the curious, who, from the long war, had been kept in perfect ignorance of our neighbours the French; and I own that the proposition, backed, as it was, by a glowing description of Italy, and the necessity of every man enlarging the sphere of his travels in order more completely to eradicate the narrow notions which pervade all English minds, greatly contributed to strengthen my disposition. My father heard the request with a mixture of pleasure and of pain: he knew it would benefit me as a man of the world, but he felt how lonesome he should become without the cheerful and well-contested arguments which the tutor and myself invariably got up for his amusement, and which we had prepared in order to introduce witticisms, or quotations which we had carefully committed to our memories. I think now I see that poor deceived old man rubbing his hands with joy, as he would say, 'Well done, George! you have got the best of that argument.'

"This system of deception grew with its growth, and I do not hesitate to aver, that two more finished hypocrites never existed than my tutor and myself."

"He is telling the truth now," said Testy. "You may rely upon it, if he goes on as steadily as he has begun, we shall have a most respectable account of a young man's progress through life."

"I will not, as God is my judge, say one word of falsehood. I have broken the ground," continued Walsingham, "and I will not hesitate now to make an open confession, in order, if possible, to stand better than I do in your estimation."

"Well, there's something in that," said Testy; "for you certainly could not stand worse than you have ever done since the first day I saw you. Go on and prosper! you may yet live to get absolution from all the priests of the different religions you have followed.—Oh! but we shall have a rare treat! And I hope you will not resemble the Koran: the more one reads, the less satisfactory is the result. *Via ad bonos mores*, as your tutor taught you,—et cetera:—you know the rest."

We soon had obtained my father's permission to travel; nor were we long in making due preparations. I had learnt French sufficiently to understand it;—"

"Indeed!" ejaculated Testy: "I never should have given you credit for that."

"—And I now was well supplied with books which were calculated to amuse me by their wit, and shake the little religion

I ever possessed from my mind. Amongst these, Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary was most recommended by my tutor. I read—was amused;—wit is a powerful adversary, ridicule a most wonderful sapper and miner: I became enamoured of the author, and, in loving him, soon became a convert to his doctrine; at least, I was taught to talk lightly on subjects which never should be lightly treated, and if I was not absolutely a Deist, I could scarcely be ranked as a follower of the Established Church.

"Our intention—at least, the expressed intention of my tutor, was to go on to Rome without any particular long stay; but no sooner were we arrived in Paris, than I foresaw we were destined to remain much longer than I had anticipated. I found my tutor had taken apartments by the month, and that he soon formed acquaintances who were destined to enrich him. But now his greediness to possess wealth broke out, and at once fixed me in a position the most derogatory to the feelings of a gentleman."

"Gently, gently!" said Testy.

"I maintain," continued Walsingham, "that at that moment I had not entirely forfeited the name. True, I had grossly violated the law by which that character is upheld; but I felt as yet I had not forfeited the claim, for the world were ignorant of my misdoings, saving my schoolboy faults, which even the most rigid may sometimes overlook. My tutor asked me for the money I owed him. You will scarcely credit it, when I tell you that he had won of me more than one thousand pounds, and for that sum I had given bills, which he had drawn, and I, after my attaining my majority, had accepted. I was entirely ignorant of these transactions, and signed my name, implicitly believing that these bills would never be shown against me.

"With all my father's goodness, he had one fault,—at least in my eyes. Although when at home he gave me an elegant sufficiency, yet for my travels, he fixed my income at five hundred a year; the tutor was retained at his usual salary of three hundred a year; the travelling expenses to be kept as a separate account, and paid by my father. I told my creditor how useless it was to ask me for what at that moment he knew I could not pay: and he, moderating his demand for the whole, made me agree to give him two hundred a year out of my allowance; to which I consented.

"At this time there was a young man in Paris well known, I am aware, to you all—it was Houghton: my tutor met him at

the Salon—they both played high, and both soon became intimate acquaintances. And at this time there was a family—Shall I go on ?" he asked, looking at Stanhope.

"Go on, sir," said Stanhope; "for the faults and follies of both parties you have mentioned, are known to us all."

"I would not advert to any thing unconnected with my own history, but that I should appear to tell a falsehood if I did not mention that which you know to be the fact. Houghton was first enticed by my tutor to our apartments; and here first began my own villany. The tutor, after a lapse of some time, pressed me hard for more money, alleging he had lost what I had given him: he bade me write to my father, stating, that one night I had, after apparently retiring to rest, left the house and entered the Salon; that there, excited by wine, I had been tempted to gamble, and had lost about eight hundred pounds—which was now about the half of what my debt had increased by my tutor. I did it, and I received for answer, 'that I was perfectly incorrigible, and that my imprudence could only be checked by making me feel the degradation to which I had subjected myself.'—Give me a little water, for I am weak."

CHAPTER XVII.

Some time elapsed before Walsingham was sufficiently recovered to continue his narrative, during which time Stanhope expressed his horror in unmeasured terms to Douglass concerning the gradual developement of the meanness which ever accompanies a gamester's existence. Testy, who knew the tutor by name, and had often met him, was ignorant until this time that Walsingham had been enticed into the Salon by his means. It was evident that the gamester's confession was true, and likewise that he required rest to enable him to continue. Douglass, who trembled as the story advanced, recommended leaving Walsingham to his undisturbed pillow, with John as an attendant; but the wounded man heard it, and replied that he would rather advance a little further in his history before they took their leave.

"I know," he said, "that you anticipate my attempted escape; be not afraid—I have now begun, and as you are the only people who could assist me at present, I am not disposed to forego the advantage. To satisfy you that I am the son of Sir William, I will send for my letters; but if I could be removed to my own lodgings, I should be better able to convince you by numerous records, than in this miserable Café, how gradually have I sunk from affluence to poverty, and risen again by the very means which ruined me."

A consultation was held. Testy was of opinion, that now, as Walsingham was sincere, and that there was no danger of his leaving Paris, it was better at once to remove him. John was called; but John had no such fine feelings for the person who had caused the death of his sister. He was asked to get a litter, and lend a hand to convey him home. "I'm blessed," said the frank sailor, "if I would not sooner get him a coffin, and clap him in it myself. I'll lend a hand with all my heart to get a litter, that's my duty so to do; but it's not John Jen-

kins who will ever carry that fellow, excepting to hang him at his journey's end."

Testy, ever alert, soon found one of those useful conveyances; Walsingham was placed in it, and some Frenchmen, who had heard how gallantly an Englishman had led the attack on the Louvre, volunteered to convey him home.

The exorbitant demand of the master of the Café was paid, and Walsingham by nine at night was safely placed in his own bed; whilst John requested permission to attend upon him, promising that he would never appear in his sight, but only watch that he did not escape through the door. The party now returned to the Hôtel Chatham: it was agreed not to say one word of the communication which had been made, as it would be of no possible service suddenly crushing the hopes of Amelia, when at the very end something might transpire to restore Walsingham to the world.

Testy, on leaving the hotel, went directly to the abode of Sir William. It was answered, that no one could see him, as he was so weak as to make his death almost certain if he was at all agitated: there was, however, some hope that he might survive a week or more. Testy asked to see the servant, and an old gray-headed person soon announced himself as that person. Testy's manner was a passport to conversation; he knew the world and its manners well, and soon gleaned from the old butler that he had been in the family before the only child was born —that he should know him again—and on hearing that he was seriously wounded, (Testy had stretched a point there, in order to make sure of the old servant's attendance,) he at once consented to meet Testy at eight o'clock the following morning, and, under pretence of buying something for his master, say if the gamester was or was not the man he assumed to be.

Stanhope never betrayed one word of the secret even to his wife; a virtue which one of the greatest of generals could not withstand. He saw that his favourite sister was blindly, rashly in love with a man whom she believed perfection, for he it was who advised Douglass against gaming. Mrs. Douglass had never betrayed the levity of his conversation to Amelia, and the girl saw in the man who had bravely staked his life for that of a stranger, a hero of romance. Suddenly to turn her from the object of her love, Stanhope knew to be impossible; for a girl of her ardent imagination would have considered it the height of weakness to surrender an object she loved, because that object was condemned against her better judgment. It had been agreed

to meet at ten o'clock the following morning; but at eight, much to the astonishment of Walsingham, Testy entered his room.

"Walsingham," he began, "I have known you many years, and have despised you, because I knew the manner by which you lived. I will not, however, be beat out of the theory I have ever held—that no man is so thoroughly bad but that he may be reclaimed. Last night you began your confessions; and you had three priests to give you absolution, and all were willing to be reconciled to a repentant sinner. You said you were the son of Sir William Walsingham; let me introduce you to an old friend." Here he beckoned to the old servant, who, when he saw the wounded man, instantly recognised him, and wiping a tear from his eye, said,

"Master William, I bless the day, for I see you again, although wounded. Speak to me, sir, for I have news you will not be sorry to hear, or I to tell."

"How is my father, Thomas?" said Walsingham, his lips quivering with emotion, his voice faltering as he spoke.

"Ill, sir, very ill; but it will rejoice his heart to know, that the first words I heard uttered by his son, was an inquiry after him."

"I say, old boy," began Testy, "you are one of the right sort! do you think his father will see him again?" and he gave the old fellow a touch of the elbow, which nearly qualified him for the undertaker.

"See him again!" said the old man; "only let him get up and come with me this instant, and I'll forfeit my life if by eleven o'clock he is not only forgiven, his faults forgotten, but his name reinstated in his father's will."

"Don't be in too great a hurry, old gentleman," said Testy; "the better part of valour, we are told, is discretion, and in this case discretion will do more than hurry. You must tell Sir William that his son is arrived; mention his being hurt, not wounded, in the row yesterday; say that you have seen him, —don't forget his first request,—and when you have prepared the way, we shall be enabled to remove him to his father's abode. He will make full reparation for all his faults; you'll be made peace-maker general to the family; and if the old boy does not leave you a handsome legacy, and the son double it, he ought to go to the devil, and take his darling boy as his companion."

"I never think of reward, sir, when my heart tells me I am doing what is right and proper. I remember the day when his

poor dear mother placed her hand upon his head, as he knelt by her bedside, and blessed him. I little thought then, that but a year was to expire before he would leave his father's house almost for ever."

"Tell me," said Walsingham, raising himself up, "tell me the truth, Thomas. After I had left him, and he had discarded me, did he ever speak of me kindly, or remember me affectionately?"

"Ay, not once, but always. But his temper was ungovernable; at times he would rave against the ingratitude of his son, who could thus follow a life of pleasure, and leave him to all the pains of old age without a companion. You know the step he took, and I know who would benefit most if he died without being reconciled to you."

"Thomas," said Walsingham, "I have had full leisure to repent my ingratitude, and it has been sincere. If he will receive me without the upbraidings I deserve, I will be there to-day; but if his seeing me would excite his anger in the melancholy state he is now in, I would rather he died leaving me the shilling I expect to find in his will, than that his life should be shortened one moment even through a reconciliation."

"If you are not humbugging us now, Master Walsingham," said Testy, "you have still one drop of the gentleman and the Christian in your veins; and I don't despair of seeing the past forgotten, and the future brilliant. Come, old boy! you had better be off,—time creeps on, and we have something else to arrange between this and noon."

"Then, good-by'e, Master William, for the present! Before the sun goes down this day, I hope to see you by your father's bedside, never to leave him again in this world."

"Mr. Testy," said Walsingham, "you, who ever pursued me with unrelenting hatred, have now proved my best friend. There is one other favour to the many you have done in this one act yet remaining. You know of my engagement to Amelia Stanhope—you know her sister's history: how can I overcome obstacles which appear to me insurmountable?"

"We shall see as your history goes on. I see in you already a man aware of the mischief he has committed: this is the first step to repentance. I would rather see every man happy, than one miserable; but I have an awful distrust of human nature, and never pledge myself to any one. Do you continue to-day as you began yesterday, and even Stanhope

might be reconciled, and you accepted in the only manner that reparation can be made."

It was ten o'clock, and Stanhope, anxious not to lose a moment, had forced Douglass, who appeared rather unwilling to attend, to the door. John let them in, and made his report, that he had reconnoitred the enemy's vessel, and that it was still in the harbour. Stanhope never offered his hand; but Douglass, who somehow felt his fate bound up with that of his plunderer, gave his, which was received with a more fervent squeeze than he had ever experienced.

"Come," said Testy, "we have little time to lose, and I want to know how the world wags outside: go on with your confessions, Walsingham, and I'll give you some wine and water if you require any."

This sudden change in Testy's manner—the familiarity of the address, and the readiness expressed to oblige, struck Stanhope forcibly. The party sat round the bedside; and John, who was at the door, overheard every word.

"My father," began Walsingham, "having refused me the money I solicited to pay my tutor, received from me a letter which I have ever since regretted. The tutor persuaded me that an only son might do any thing, and not lose his parent's affection. Accordingly I wrote this unjustifiable letter, threatening to remain abroad, and to consult my own pleasure and convenience. His answer was short, and in these words:—

"'Dear William,—I received your letter. When you come home and ask my pardon for the insult you have fixed upon me, I may forgive you. In the mean time, I shall not send you one farthing of money, nor shall I honour your bills. You may suit yourself with another companion, as I have discharged your tutor.

"'Your affectionate father,

"'William Walsingham.'

"I placed this production in the hands of my companion, and in return read a letter, just as short and as much to the point, to my tutor, in which his salary was paid up to a month in advance, money given to pay his way back to England, and in the event of my non-compliance to return, he was dismissed from his attendance on me. I now felt that I had gone too far, and would most willingly have retraced my steps; but my tutor, who was the devil in disguise, overcame all my prudent

resolutions. 'You will never want money,' he said; 'I will teach you how to make it. Your father, when he finds you determined and able to remain abroad, will be the first to make you comfortable. Besides which, you could not now return: I have placed one of your bills in the hands of a Frenchman, who will arrest you if you attempt to move. I could not help it; I wanted money, and I negotiated your bill.'

"Unaccustomed to the world and its ways, easily worked upon,—for my pride and self-sufficiency rendered me the ready tool of the tutor,—I consented to be the blind to cover the eyes of others. My name and rank placed me above suspicion; I was to ask people to my house,—play was to be introduced,—the plunder was to be shared: on these agreements being fulfilled, the bills would be cancelled on my paying two-thirds of the whole, an easy and independent living would be obtained, and William Walsingham, independent of his father, might go where he listed.

"My tutor now came forth in his proper colours: he taught me how to *secure* a dice, he showed me the use of the *doctors*, and, lastly, gave me certain wealth in the *despatches*. We invented a code of signals for whist,* by which the suit we most desired to be led was made known without a chance of discovery; and the questions put to the boy who was advertised as possessing 'second-sight' were not more ingenious than our code. There was no game at which we could not deceive. At écarté, mechanical cards made the turning the king a certainty; and many a man have I seen examine the pack, and own that luck would overcome the best play.

"For some time we reaped an abundant harvest—our expenses rose with the ruin of our victims, until one day, when by ill luck we invited a young French nobleman, who had become possessed of a large sum of money by the death of his wife, who was an Englishwoman. With him came another Frenchman of high descent,—if illegitimate children could take rank. We dined at my lodgings: of course all the luxuries of Paris were placed before us—the *élite* of French cookery, the choicest dishes of the Rocher were upon our table. Every subject of conversation was tried,—but cards were scrupulously avoided. We sat long: my tutor was temperate, myself mo-

* The method referred to, is an alphabetical arrangement: thus—if you want a club led, you take your own card from your hand with the thumb and first finger; if a diamond, with the thumb and two fingers; if a heart, with three fingers; and if a spade, with four fingers.

derate; but the French, led on to talk of their great and glorious conquests, soon began to sing those spirit-stirring songs of De Berenger: then the blood rose—fire was added to the flame—they became excited beyond prudence, and when the tutor, with a knowledge of human nature never surpassed, allowed the two heroes to dwindle from excitement into lethargy by remaining silent himself, the evening was voted dull, and cards asked for by our visiters. This was the point always aimed at,—to make the proposition come from the company, and then to give an unwilling assent.

"We succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations. Ecarté was played, my tutor always siding with the Frenchman, who played against me, and easily communicating the hand of my unwary antagonist. We began at five francs, and soon rose the stakes to hundreds. The evening finished; one of our company had lost about sixteen hundred napoleons; the other, only winged, hardly wounded, was minus about one hundred and fifty. The temper of the greatest loser increased with his loss; he became frantic when he lost his last heavy stake, and dared to utter an unknown truth in the assertion that he had been cheated. We dismissed him into the street, facilitating his exit by the application of a foot. His friend espoused his cause, and made an attempt to resent the insult; but, being rather drunk, he slid down the well-polished stairs, and was soon, with his enraged companion, retracing his steps to his own home.

"No sooner were they gone, than we held a conversation as to the best mode of proceeding. Neither had paid, and the money made so large a sum that it was impossible to give up our riches without a struggle,—and gamesters are ready bullies. My mentor soon made up his mind to insist on payment; for it was obvious, if we gave up our claim, that the accusation of cheating would have been well founded. We had nothing for it but to brave it out.

"The young Frenchman, who possessed the most money, very prudently thought it not worth while to risk his life for one hundred and fifty napoleons, and paid that sum the following morning. This made us secure, as it was a proof he considered that he had fairly lost the money, and consequently we stood upon high and secure ground. My tutor now urged his claim;—he was positively refused: he talked of the circumstance in all public places, insulted the Frenchman by calling him a coward and a vagabond, backed up his words by spitting

in his face, and very unceremoniously placed a cane with a slight impetus across his victim's shoulders.

"'There is a point past which no one can submit: he sent a challenge—my tutor refused it until the money was paid: it was ultimately agreed to be paid on the ground, and early on that day week we were punctual to our appointment in the Bois de Boulogne.

"It was the first time I had ever been called upon to witness a duel; but the second of the Frenchman was an adept in these affairs. On our arrival on the ground, the money was paid over to my friend, who placed it in his pocket. A barrier duel was decided upon, thirty paces being the outside limit, and ten the inside. The pistol was not loaded when I approached the man who had been kindly recommended to my father as a religious, well-disposed person, and in every respect qualified for the sacred profession he intended to follow. I took his hand; it was as cool and as steady as if Death was not abroad, but sleeping with the rest of his comrades. I asked him if I could be of any service to him in the event of an accident occurring: he replied that he intended to shoot his adversary, and that he never missed his man. I urged him to think that a chance shot, even to use his own expression, and most particularly applicable in the present instance, might kill the devil: he replied, he had no fears for the event; begged me to look carefully that the caps were good, and the charge of powder reduced to the small measure I should find in the case; and stopping the speech I had begun,—for I still retained a religious awe of death, especially when courted, and when the man who had to defend his life or take that of his adversary was decidedly in the wrong,—'My dear fellow,' he replied, 'you are young yet: men who follow our profession must never flinch, their chance of security is in their known readiness to fight; and I have not been cracking eggs at forty paces every morning of my life, to fear my missing a man, even if he was as feather-edged as a penknife, or as slim and as round as a piece of stubble.'

"I loaded the pistols as he desired: it hardly appeared twelve grains of powder; the ball was wrapped in a greased piece of linen, and was rammed down with great difficulty: and, I own, at that moment I would rather have taken the place of my tutor than have witnessed the scene. I took his hand before I gave him the pistol: he smiled, and said, 'I am much too bad to be killed: do not make me make a fool of myself; there—tell them I am ready; the sooner we begin the better, for I hate suspense.'

"There was a conscious rectitude about the Frenchman; he spoke quickly to his friend, and when he shook hands with him, he rose his head proudly towards his adversary, and said, quite loud enough to reach my ears, 'I will not retract a syllable; I am sure they were both concerned.'

"The French second, who was a general of high repute, advanced towards me and asked if I would explain the regulations to be observed. I left it to him; and as my tutor understood French better than myself, there was no occasion for an interpreter. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'you will use your own discretion, and fire when you like. The party firing will receive his adversary's shot from the place from which the first person fired: you may advance to the inside barrier if you like, before you, but no closer. Am I understood?'

"It was more a form than any thing requisite, for the whole thing had been explained before by myself: each party answered, yes, and the word was given, '*Commémcez.*' The Frenchman advanced about four paces, and as he stopped, the tutor fired. There was no doubt that the shot hit, but it was not fatal; the Frenchman recovered the shock, and taking a steady deliberate aim, shot my friend right through the heart. He jumped upright—a muscular exertion before death, and dropped as dead as if lingering disease had worn out nature.

"I had now to act. Some police, who very kindly never interfered, stepped up: an account was taken of the transaction; the money, which I had anticipated as my own, was placed in the hands of the proper authorities; every article of his property was sealed up; and I, as in duty bound, attended the funeral of the man, enacting chief mourner over him, who had taught me disobedience to my parents, had swerved me from the straightforward path of honour,—who had initiated me in villany, and who was so distrustful of his pupil, that he even had pocketed the plunder before he died."

"It's all true," said Testy: "I went to see the ground four hours after the thief was shot.—Go on."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"It was after this unfortunate, or, perhaps, fortunate duel, that I followed Houghton to Spa.—There is no occasion to dwell upon events which succeeded his ruin. I was the principal winner of his fortune; I urged him to forgery. He was so innocent of the world's ways, that I played him double or quits six times running: I used the 'despatches,'—won, of course, and left him in despair, a ruined man, and one ready to commit any villany.

"I then crossed over to England, having assumed the name of Cavendish before I arrived at Spa. It was Houghton's money which enabled me to publish the lie, that I had inherited a fortune. In London I was little known; but still my rumoured wealth gave me an opportunity of frequenting one of the most celebrated establishments in Europe. I there saw that no situation in life, however high by birth or honourable by descent, would be a barrier strong enough to resist temptations to commit dishonourable actions. The gamester knows no nice distinctions;—the excitement of play overcomes all restraint—the greedy avariciousness of wealth grows stronger as the drain becomes continued, until, at last, to have the means of procuring the excitement a dishonourable action is resorted to, the word of honour violated, and foul play hazarded. I am not worse than my neighbours, Mr. Testy; many of higher birth than myself have done meaner things."

"I beg you will not mention them," interrupted Testy; "for I know that on one occasion a man of high rank won continually of the bank, and was as regularly paid; on the third or fourth night he lost, wrote a cheque for the amount, left the room with some little character still lingering behind him: the clerks had hardly arrived at their stations the next day, before an order was sent, if not personally delivered, that the cheque should not be paid; and thus the winner was balked of his expectancy. You need not, Mr. Walsingham, rummage your brains to tell us

anecdotes of men who by this cursed infatuation have fallen from the summit of grandeur to the lowest depth of infamy; or of youths who, having begun at school to learn tricks at cards, continued their tricks in after life, making honour a by-word. Go on with your history or confession, for you are now coming to the part which to me is most interesting, as about this time I lost sight of you."

"It required a large expenditure to keep myself in the situation I had usurped. But gamesters have no income; their principal is a floating capital, sometimes larger, sometimes smaller—decreasing gradually until the last throw of the dice renders them paupers. They go through all the changes of post-obits on a father's life; they forestall pensions by selling the reversion; they borrow money which they never repay; until at last, their companions get tired of their company—they are rejected by their more fortunate, or perhapse more adept associates, and they slink away to some obscurity, where they hasten death by continual intoxication.

"Some there are who swindle in another way—men who have gained a notoriety from dress, or a peculiar style, voted uncommon, and therefore enviable. These men introduce the young and inexperienced to their tailors or their carriage-builders. The tradesman is declared the only one in the modern Babel who can cut a coat or build a chariot. A large sum is demanded, because the article can only be procured at the shop; the overplus goes to the unworthy fellow who recommended the too credulous youth; and thus some who make the greatest show are in reality the poorest, and are entirely upheld by being a species of commission agents. This is common to both sexes.

"Here I saw how valuable was a little character. The meaner gamester sheltered himself behind the untarnished reputation of his friend, and thus, as it were, stood unseen whilst he picked a pocket. Then came the little whisper of detraction; it grew louder and louder as the public tongue sported with the character, until at last the Surrey side of the water, the Fleet, Newgate, or the Marshalsea, received as inmates men who had revelled in every luxury, and who, from shaking their elbows at play, shiver out existence in a gaol.

"I was near Worcester," (here Jack came more into the room,) "when I heard that my father, who could no longer support his lonely situation, had, in a fit of passion, married his housekeeper. I thought I would be revenged upon him, and

marry a girl of low life, and with her drive to his den and show him the future Lady Walsingham dressed as a country peasant. I fixed upon one young and handsome: I made advances with the greatest caution, and with, I swear, the most honourable of all foolish intentions. I gave her dresses—I met her often; in an unguarded moment she fell:—I was satiated—took her to Dover—left her, and returned to France."

"Give me my sister back, you infernal villain!" said Jack, springing forward. "She was my own sister, and you ruined her—left her; and my master saw her die mad—mad for you! —By God, I swear—"

Here old Testy interfered, holding back the sailor. "Swear not at all, and let that poor wretch unburthen his mind. What is done, is done: can he recall the dead—can he give you back your sister? Stand back: I honour your feelings, but I despise your rashness."

"Ah, it is well," said Jack, "for gentlemen to talk who never have known a sister's ruin!"

"Stop," said Stanhope, "nor make the scene more painful than it is. Walsingham avoided, with gentlemanly feelings, the narrative or mention of that which now has come stronger from the mouth of a menial.—I know all that you can feel—I have felt it much more painfully than you could feel; for education and refinement add a pang to pain which ignorance and vulgarity shield from the lowly. How is it, Mr. Walsingham, that you did not recognise my other sister, and avoid again inflicting a pang upon our family?"

"I had never seen her in my life," replied Walsingham, "neither had I ever seen your sister Louisa, until I met her at Spa: Houghton was intimate with the family, but I never passed the threshold. As for this poor girl, whose fate for the first time I have heard this moment, would I could have averted it! but my poverty increased as my character grew more suspected, and I was obliged to withdraw the little annuity I had promised, and for some time paid her. I can yet make some reparation. I must shortly become, comparatively speaking, a wealthy man; and, as I live, I will do all that a man can do to repair the injury to the family.—Let me go on without interruption. Before long, I shall be summoned to the bedside of my dying father; and I would go there with a conscience as light as sincere repentance can make it.

"Disgusted at this act of my father, who sought in the embrace of his wife a child to whom he could leave his wealth to

the certain disinheritance of myself, I wrote a letter, which I penned in the excitement of passion, and in which I lavished the most unqualified abuse, declaring my intention of never again seeing one who had so shamefully used me, nor of darkening the doors of a house disgraced by the elevation of a cook to the title of Lady Walsingham. I received a letter, which is here; it is my father on paper—the way he always spoke, the manner in which he always conveyed his sentiments.

"'My dear Boy,

"'Do as you like,—stay abroad and make a bad character worse—continue a swindler; but remember, my consent is to be asked before you darken my doorway.

"'Affectionately,

"'Your Father.'"

"When a man marries to annoy his child, he not unfrequently makes himself supremely miserable. My father soon found that he elevated to an equal a woman who could be only tolerated as a menial. There is no tyrant, it is said, like an emancipated slave; and no sooner had the cook found herself installed in her new dignity, than she began, as she elegantly termed it, to weed the kitchen-garden. Every servant was discharged but the old butler. They never relished the charity promotion, and could not obey one who a week before had sat at their own table; bickerings arose above and below stairs, the house was turned into a hotbed of dissension, and my poor father found himself as much under authority as he had formerly held his new partner.

"The news of all this unquiet reached me through the footman, who obtained a place in a family travelling abroad; and in the moment of exultation over my father, I wrote him an ironical letter, congratulating him upon his pleasant prospects as he neared his grave, and gave a flourishing account of several old gentlemen whose 'decent limbs' had been stretched by their *new* wives, who chuckled over prosperity obtained by the death of their *old* husbands. The letter was unanswered; and I became poorer and poorer, until I actually was driven to ask charity of the very woman I had insulted. That charity was not refused; and, strange as it may appear, that sum of money was the means of reinstating me in affluence. It was five pounds, sent to me here: I turned it into francs, and looked at all I had in the world. I was then a perfect adept in cheating; I could

manage the mechanical cards at blind hookey so as to insure success; and chance threw a young gentleman in my way—"

"What!" said Testy in some surprise, "can you cheat at blind hookey?"

"You can cheat at *any* game," replied Walsingham; "and with mechanical cards, you can cut a high or a low card exactly at your pleasure. My victim was young, it is true, but I was poor, and conscience and myself had grown into good fellowship. I met him in the street; he had slipped into the kennel, and I was ever ready to assist a gentleman and to make a new acquaintance—my old ones and myself had long since separated. I saw the young man to his house—called of course the next day to inquire after him,—dined with him the day following—talked over the danger of gaming—told an infinity of anecdotes, all calculated to alarm the youngster from public play, and, after a bottle of cool claret, allowed myself to be drawn into a game at blind hookey."

"Gamesters such as I had become always travel like constables, with every article about them to insure the capture of their prey. False dice are not unfrequently carried in a toothpick-case; and I once saw a case with two lids of the above description which held fair dice, loaded dice, and 'despatches,' on the one side,—whilst the other contained a few quills cut into shape, and which had often stood sentinels on the sideboard of a coffee-room. It required but little precaution never to make a mistake; for on the lid to be opened in company, the arms neatly engraved showed the side.

"I had mechanical cards, dice, and 'doctors' about me: I easily substituted mine for his, by drawing his attention to something apparently moving in a corner of the room, and before I left him I was worth twenty pounds, and carried all my fortune in my pocket—as many officers carry all their gold on their shoulders. I took good care again to call to offer revenge, but declared, after we were once quits, nothing should induce me to play above five francs, a sum so insignificant as scarcely to be called 'betting' by men of my fortune. He agreed to dine with me; and I procured the assistance of a very respectable young Frenchman, who had been ejected from Frascati's, as croupier, because he mistook some money of his master's for his own.

"We dined together. All conversation on play was avoided until the victim introduced it himself. The Frenchman declared all games of chance bad but hazard, and our visiter soon

fell into the trap most ingeniously open for him. We began very low, increasing our stakes. I, as was agreed, lost at first, then recovered a little, and at the close of the evening was a winner of about ten pounds. Now came the great hit: I was in and held the box,—I was the winner from both, and I agreed to play them double or quits five times running, making a kind of virtue of a theft, and declaring myself unwilling to walk off with a penny of my young friend's money. It was instantly agreed to by my visiter, but strenulously refused by the Frenchman, who declared that five times was no chance at all, as he had oftentimes thrown in eight or ten mains. I, of course, yielded to the hint, and proposed eight times; which being considered as a certainty by one, and scarcely sufficient by the other, was ultimately agreed to.

"I always threw rather violently; and having at the time proposed fair boxes and fair dice, it became requisite to change the latter. My companion, the Frenchman, was prepared with his tooth-pick-case: I saw when he was ready, and calling 'seven,' threw both dice off the table in the direction of the Frenchman: he picked them up and returned me the 'despatches.' I called 'seven' for the eight times running, and of course, won: I then managed the same manœuvre to get back the proper dice, and succeeded. I declared I would no longer run the risk of doubling the stake, which had grown to the sum of one thousand two hundred and eighty pounds. I spun the dice on the table in order to convince *myself* that they were not loaded, and I received a cheque from this gentleman, then about twenty-three years of age, condoling with him on his bad fortune, and recommending him to dine with me the following day. He accepted this, and would have complied with it—"

"—Only, interrupted Testy, "he met me, told me of his loss, and *I*—as I recommended another gentleman who played on a system—recommended him to be content with the first loss, and not risk his money, temper, and reputation by another attempt to *repair the injury*."

"There is no particular friendship amongst gamesters," continued Walsingham. "No sooner was he clear of the house, than the Frenchman declared he was entitled to half the winnings. This was impossible, and, after much altercation, we very nearly quarrelled, until, as if preconcerted,—for we both made the remark together, 'That when rogues fell out, honest men got their due,'—we agreed that he should receive five hundred and eighty pounds, and that the remainder should be mine.

We negotiated the cheque the next day, made the above division of the spoil; the Frenchman retired to another quarter of Paris, and I, dressed out in gentlemanly attire, once more frequented the Salon.

"I was received but coldly; but I disregarded all hints and inuendoes: I had become hardened in vice, and I walked about the rooms, certainly not overburthened by friends, but constantly watched by some, as I watched for others. I played; but when I did, I was generally unsuccessful: but as I sat at the table every night and did play, I was invited to the dinners, and there kept a most vigilant look-out for new-comers. I met many. Some came with the quick glance of curiosity: those were my men. Others, accustomed to the scene nightly witnessed, seemed to consider the invitation to dinner as a right, and being practitioners themselves, were more likely to pursue any game I might start: these men I avoided. Lastly came the young man fresh from college, wise in his own conceit, believing himself competent to face the world and all its iniquities,—pleased at being called a man, whose knowledge was not sufficient to guide him through a city, or extricate him from a difficulty: to such flattery was the best lure. They were easily known by the careless risk of their money—their increase of stakes on losing, their fear of the contrary in success—their continued admiration of their persons in the glass, and the insolent buffoonery of disguising the voice which God had given them, by lisping words scarcely intelligible. Flattery won them, and I was enriched. When I say, enriched, I mean that I always had sufficient to pay for these rooms, live when prey was near me handsomely, dress as becomes a gentleman, and independent in all but conscience.

"I was now swimming with the tide, which swept me along clear of rocks, in which many of my companions were wrecked. It was true that I could not land in safety amidst those whose honourable names made the shore inviting, neither did I glide down unmolested by an inward monitor who long since had resigned the helm to a more indifferent pilot; but I was in comparative affluence, and consequently more adverse than ever to any reconciliation with my father.

"Once again I received a letter from him. Years had altered him: the fire of his heart was almost quenched. Again he was a widower—again a desolate old man: he wrote a letter which might have moved a worse heart than my own."

"There are not many of that kind adrift," grunted Testy.

"Instead of upbraiding me with my want of common affection—instead of rebuking me for my wanton insults, he excused me in accusing himself: to his second marriage he attributed my estrangement; and after again and again recapitulating his own fault, he implored me to return to solace him in his old age,—he offered me an independence, a total oblivion of the past, and affluence for the future.

"It happened that I received this letter the very day after I had met Mr. Douglass; and feeling confident that I should soon become independent without assistance from my father, wrote back a cold refusal to return, and added insult to injury, by saying that I was well aware the marriage settlement money must become mine, and that sooner or later I should inherit it. I finished by saying that I hoped, during the years he had parted with me, he had not allowed my favourite dog to starve, as he kindly intended me to do.

"To this I received a short letter, saying, that he had done all a father could do to seek reconciliation with his son, and that he implored God to forgive me, as he had forgiven me, and that I might turn from my wickedness and live. I tossed the letter into the fire, and remarked to a friend of mine whom you met here the other day, that old men invariably tried to make up for a life of bitterness by a drop of cordial; and that the most hardened sinners were averse at the last hour to throw away a chance of salvation, and made a moment's repentance for thirty years of crime.

"The count was much too wise a man to allow me to cool over my folly: we had Douglass in our net, and I was meshing a golden draught of fish. I promised to introduce him to Douglass in order the more completely to ruin him, for I will be candid now. Gamesters never feel for the misfortunes of those they plunder. We have often read, that there is something in the misfortunes of others which is not displeasing to their best friends; but the ruin of a man whose fortune passes to the gamester, excites not the smallest compassion, not the slightest remorse.

"It is now, after having slightly mentioned the heavier incidents of my life, that I come to this last scene. It is needless, perhaps, relating that I took an active part in the revolution—why I cannot tell: for men like myself, although obliged occasionally to act the bully, and not unfrequently to risk their lives as the highwayman does for the plunder of the man with whom

he accidentally meets, are much averse to public broils; and when the city is in commotion, they generally remain quiet.

"I have told how early in life I was initiated into mischief, and how sedulously I followed the wrong path; but I have yet to mention one mode of making money, which perhaps you will discredit, and yet, after the candid confession I have made, I may be entitled to some belief. I have had gentlemen, men like myself, of birth, of good connexion—nay, of actual wealth, who had become so infatuated with the love of play, that they, without any reason, have become sharpers, and have paid me handsomely for my experience, and attended my school of education at a price I will not mention: with the knowledge thus obtained, and by long practice, in seclusion these men have plundered their most intimate friends, attributing to fortune what was due to science. Their names I must keep a secret, or I should be guilty of greater perfidy than in any act of my life; but beware of that man who, whilst he reprobates public play, entices you first by small stakes, and then gradually increases them as he perceives the wine to operate, and the spirits to be excited.

CHAPTER XIX.

"I EXPECT my father's servant soon," resumed Walsingham; "but I have yet time to inform you of my determination. But what new excitement is this? I fear the revolution has but begun." Testy left the room as the approaching noise grew louder and louder: he had no fears for his life, for he was well known in Paris, and the English had grown in the French estimation. He was absent but a short time, when he gave, in explanation of the riot, the well-known and oft-told expedition to Rambouillet: the noise was nothing but a complication of shouts; there was no enemy in Paris, and in an hour the city would appear deserted.

"Last night," said Walsingham, "I invested my whole fortune in the French funds: they are even now under fifty; confidence will be restored in a week, and I mistake much if by this day month they are not at eighty. I will now place every farthing in the hands of Mr. Testy and Mr. Stanhope, to repay to the people mentioned in this paper the sums set against their names. I have, as far as I am able, calculated even the interest of the money they lost to me. I ask you only to wait one month more in Paris, to satisfy yourselves that I am the son of Sir William Walsingham, to pay my debts, and if you cannot forgive, at least to pity me.

"To you, Captain Stanhope, I have much to say in extenuation of the insult offered to your sister. I met her the mistress of a man who, I knew, intended to desert her. I own I followed her; but make some excuses for the enticement which provoked my conduct.

"To you, Jenkins, I cannot make any reparation equal to your loss; but I will do all I can for the future."

"I'm not to be humbugged like these gentlemen," said Jack; "if you are inclined to serve me, this is how it can be done: I know the north star from a cabbage-stalk, and the sun and moon from the admiral's poop-lights; I can navigate a ship as well as

most men who throw a piece of wood overboard, and walk alongside of it to see how fast the ship sails. I want to do something for myself, and not be a burthen to Captain Stanhope, who has placed me to do my duty where I'm not accustomed to do it. Can you make me captain of a collier?—if you can, do it; then I shall always sleep on board a ship, and, I hope, die on board a ship; for, to tell you the truth, I don't like this shore-going rig at all, and my legs don't feel at home in these sliding gunter leather buckets."

"I call God to witness—" began Walsingham.

"Gently, gently," said Testy, "and mind your steerage, as Jack says."

"—That I will, before the sun goes down, take some measure to insure you your request; and, in addition, I will settle upon you one hundred pounds a year from this moment."

"I won't touch your hand," said Jack, "for I should feel cold if I did: but I thank you, and now I relieve myself from my watch; but if you had not done what you have done, you or John Jenkins would never have walked out of this cursed outlandish place alive. I'm off now to look after our craft; and if she's not blocked up, I'll get her afloat and down to the hotel." Saying this, honest Jack steered away, making faces at every man he saw, and calling himself Captain Jenkins to every one who asked his name.

The old butler was now announced. Sir William was reported to have become reanimated when he heard of his son's expected visit. Every one assisted Walsingham to dress; and when he descended the stairs, Testy was heard to say:—

"I never turn my back on the man who confesses his faults and endeavours to retrieve an error; at the same time I never place implicit confidence in a man until he has proved his sincerity by parting with his money. You must manage to return here to night, for your goods and chattels shall not go out of this house until I have seen every record of your past life destroyed."

"There is," remarked Stanhope, "in every gentleman some honourable feeling left. I never knew one so perfectly bad, but had one or two green spots on his heart, which, at the end, gave a verdure and freshness to the whole body. I acquit him of that which I thought him before the most guilty. A woman who places herself under the *protection* of any man, offers herself to public insult; and I know that many would have acted similarly under the same circumstances. You will hear from

me again, Mr. Walsingham, when your first painful interview with your father is past; and in shaking hands with you now, I do it in the sincere hope that you may by your future conduct merit your restoration to society."

"Your sister!" faintly ejaculated Walsingham; "she would guide me better, and save me from a relapse arising from her refusal."

"I will not answer for her," replied Stanhope. "Testy, myself, and Douglass will bear witness of her feelings in regard to yourself; every past act must be made known to her. I will not extenuate or add aught in malice; as you have recounted your life, so will I repeat it; and if she can accept you after the recital, and your father pardon and take back his son, I will be no obstacle to a union which, I have vanity enough to believe, will keep you from ever again relapsing into your former errors. All women are vain of reforming the vicious, and virtue and innocence are strong inducements to happiness. —You walk strongly, considering your wound."

"It is nothing. When first I was taken to the Café, I busied my brains how I could turn it to account to avoid you. Now I sincerely thank Heaven for the trifling bodily pain I have endured: I feel a new being—one who has cast aside the garment of deceit, and again clothed himself as becomes a gentleman."

Testy accompanied Walsingham to the hotel where Sir William lived. Stanhope availed himself of the moment to question Douglass. From Walsingham's confession he had gleaned but little, and as yet he had not examined the list of victims. With a frankness well becoming his character before he had used subterfuge and deceit, he told his brother-in-law what had occurred: his eyes were now opened—he saw he had been the dupe not only of Walsingham's sleight-of-hand, but of his words, and, like all men when the discovery is made, became lavish of his abuse upon the wretch who had ruined him.

"Not ruined yet, thank God!" said Stanhope: "we shall have Walton over here, to take the turn of the market; and I think, with Walsingham, the rise of the funds will not only repay you, but repay you with interest. You are rather severely hit by public, but more injured by private play: the lesson is not without its moral, and you well know the value of your wife, from her excellent behaviour since the discovery. We have now to manage Amelia:—it is a serious risk marrying

her to Walsingham; but the girl is over head and ears in love, and reason will be of no avail."

"If Walsingham only half regrets," said Douglass, "the folly he has committed, as sincerely as I do the indiscretion of which I have been guilty, he would become as staid and as steady as a philosopher of eighty."

"It is my advice," said Stanhope, "to recapitulate the whole of that man's confession. Testy, never blinded by words, is resolved to be satisfied from Sir William Walsingham's own mouth that this is his son; he has followed, or rather accompanied Walsingham to the hotel: we shall be safe if he is forgiven.—I own, I am curious to see the contents of this sealed parcel, in which are the bonds and the list of his victims; but perhaps the best way will be to await the arrival of Walton, who, as a man of business, will best understand the nature of the documents. Honor was to accompany him, and in the hands of the latter we should always be safe."

"Repentance," said Douglass, "ever comes too late: it is needless now regretting my head-strong folly, which prompted me to run counter to Verity's wish in regard to the settlement. Had I done that, I should indeed have been happy."

"Come, don't drawl over the past; let us look to the future —there is many a bright gleam in the clouded sky above you— let us remain quiet and comfortable where we are, and await the arrival of the Waltons. Paris is as quiet as if Charles the Tenth had never lived, and Louis-Philippe had been born lieutenant-general of France, with Lafayette for his second in command."

They now turned into the court-yard of the Hôtel Chatham; but they had not reached the door at the further end of the court, which led to the apartments on the *rez de chaussée*, which they inhabited, before they were startled by the voice of Jack, who came clattering along in his top-boots, roaring and foaming like a Spanish bull with a parcel of fireworks stuck in his stern.

"Here's a pretty go, to be sure!" he began; "there's no living amongst pirates without an iron collar round your throat. Whilst I was keeping a look-out over that cursed land-shark, I'm blessed if they haven't cut out the carriage, and taken the pole for a Ram-bullet, as the outlandish old woman said, as she rubbed her old withered hands together, and bundled out of her garlic mouth as many words as you'd find in a station-list watch and quarter bill of an eighty-gun ship."

"Good God!" said Stanhope: "what! both carriages gone?"

"Both," said Jack; "and not only that, but every cart and omnibus which blockaded our concerns are all gone, and the coast as clear as Brighton roadstead when the clouds get up from the south-west and a thick fog comes from the sea."

"But where the devil," said Douglass, "are the carriages gone?"

"Ah!" said Jack, "that's just the question I made, and much in the same language; and all the answer I got was from the old woman and a man, the last of whom knew just about as much English as made him quite noncomprehensible, as our boatswain used to say. The monkey pursed up his mouth like the under part of a sucking fish, and said he, 'Vorter carriage gone Ram-bullet: very good, sar, for make haste carry countrymen; all tings very good for French people.'"

"What did you say to all that stuff?" said Douglass.

"Nothing," said Jack; "but I knocked him down for a cursed jackass, and made sail to report the action. You might play skittles along the Bulls'-yards now," he continued, "for there's not an obstacle the length of a capstan-bar left, and every wagon, cart, dray, hackney-coach, omnibus, and carriage has disappeared like the Flying Dutchman when he's fired a shot and sunk a ship."

"This is bad," said Douglass; "and this fellow only makes it worse. What the devil do you mean by the Bulls'-yards?"

"That long place which goes right ahead to where the French boy took the bad aim, and only wounded that precious canting, whining, lying rascal, who did you, and me, and every body else."

As Stanhope and Douglass entered the house, Jack once more approached, took off his hat, and asked for orders.

"Stay where you are," said Stanhope, "and keep a good look-out. This is bad work, Douglass!"

"Misfortunes never come singly; they fly together like parrots, one never seen without the other."

The ladies had most anxiously awaited the arrival of their husbands. Amelia's voice was first; and in her inquiries about Walsingham, she overlooked every other apparent calamity, and actually danced with joy when she heard that her lover had walked to his father's. She never listened one moment to the account of the carriage; but, being at last convinced that all her dresses were gone, she stopped her hilarity, gave a sigh, and reconciled the loss by the certainty that if there were no carriages there could be no departure.

Stanhope now went through the whole confession made by Walsingham; and never was horror more strongly exemplified than in those women. The only one calm, attentive, and resolute, was Amelia: but the sneer on her pretty lips was sufficient to convince her brother that the whole story was unbelieved by her. "Nay!" said Stanhope, rather hurt by her incredulity, "we have another witness, Testy, who was present. Besides, you may question Jack; he overheard it, and would have taken his life, had we not interposed."

"My dear Amelia," said Mrs. Douglass, for Mrs. Stanhope never spoke, "you must in reality give up all idea of this man: only imagine how seriously it would annoy your sister to find you had married one who so endeavoured to injure her reputation."

"I tell you all," said Amelia firmly, "I will marry him. You hear what Stanhope says: his repentance is sincere—he has again solicited my affections. I saw him risk his life for another; and all the words in the world would never make me believe that a man would rush into death with such a load of sin as is here represented. He made himself worse than he was, that you should like him the better when the real truth came out. Would a real gamester repay money won at cards? Pooh! nonsense!—the story is as noncomprehensible, as Jack says, as the carriage affair.—Is he not the only son of Sir William Walsingham? And pardon me, ladies," she said archly, as she walked to the glass, her face burning with blushes and excitement, "Lady Walsingham will be happy to receive you at Walsingham Hall!"

Even Stanhope, serious as he was, could not resist the temptation to laugh. The hoyden girl had given away her heart; but her spirits remained the same, and as she made an elegant courtesy towards the door as if to receive company, in walked Testy to receive the salute.

"Now come, you dear good old man!" she began, "come, and tell all these low-spirited mortals your opinion."

"It is, Miss, that you need not remind a man of his misfortunes. If I am old, I am clear-sighted: that is more than the young and the handsome can say."

"Mr. Testy," replied Amelia, "a compliment does not sit easy on your lips."

"No, my lady, that would be! but the truth does."

"A truce!" said Stanhope. "Did you see Walsingham to his father's?"

"I did, and entered the room. The old gentleman could not bear the light, and it was darkened. Walsingham threw himself on his knees, and I heard an inarticulate 'God bless you, my son! I shall now die in peace and happiness!' The heart of the prodigal was melted within him; and I heard Walsingham, the gamester—the man of no character—the confessed swindler and cheat—sob like a child! I called the old servant aside, and told him my abode. I promised to send Walsingham's toilet to the hotel; and I have no doubt in my own mind but that every word is the truth which he has uttered;—indeed, I knew so much of his character, that I must have detected any palpable falsehood."

"Had we not better open the packet, and at once realize the money?" said Douglass.

"No," said Testy. "When a man is inclined to act honourably, I would never appear to suspect him. The best plan to adopt is, to wait until after the marriage, return him the packet with the seal unbroken, and leave him to do that act, which will come with fifty times the grace from him than from another."

"Agreed," said Douglass. "How as to the result of all this?"

"In that," said Testy, "I have no voice. It is for you to consider; and you are well able to judge of the danger of a union with a gamester."

"Hold your tongue, you vile croaker!" said Amelia.

"—And you to consider," continued Testy, "how far his repentance is sincere. This I will add,—that if we never forgive in this world, we could not well supplicate forgiveness ourselves."

"Oh, you are a darling, good old man!" interrupted Amelia; "and I love you as much now as I hated you before."

"Ever in extremes!" replied Testy; "ever changing with every breeze! What would Walsingham say if he overheard that which you have now uttered?"

"Why, my dear Mr. Testy," replied Amelia, laughing, "if Mr. Walsingham was jealous of you, I know—"

"What?" interrupted Testy.

"Why, that he might as well be jealous of my grandfather."

"To this match," said Mrs. Douglass, "I never will give my consent, because I know he does not love Amelia in sincerity."

"I do not think it is worth taking any trouble about," lazily murmured Mrs. Stanhope.

"If Walsingham is sincere," said Stanhope, "I do not think it a bad match."

"It will be a lucrative one," said Douglass.

"To you it will be beneficial," said Testy: "but I will leave you to argue the point yourselves, whilst I run to do as I promised in regard of the wounded man."

It was quite in vain that the point was contested. Amelia had seen only in this worthless fellow all the good and fair side of the picture: she had been enchanted by his conversation; he had ever been in her eyes an elegant, accomplished, daring man; and however much she might have wavered on the score of Walsingham having actually robbed her brother-in-law, yet the gallant act of saving the gendarme at the risk of his own life blotted out the remembrance of all past suspicions, and he stood in her eyes—a gentleman rather addicted to play.

Stanhope was much against any precipitate step. The example of Douglass was before him, and he resolved to have, if the match proceeded, a most ample settlement,—to tie up the gamester by bonds in which he should firmly bind himself to pay a large sum of money if he ever played again: he would have the consent of Sir William from his own lips, and, like a prudent man, made plenty of good resolutions. He took the best method with all young ladies in love, not violently to oppose, but cautiously to advise: ladies do more when coaxed than when commanded. With all his prudence, however, with all his caution, he found upon one subject that he gained no ground. Amelia's mind was made up; she was resolved to reform the rake. A man of his courage must possess good qualities; the jewel was in the toad's skull; and, therefore, the numerous conversations, invariably ended with the point upon which they set out, that Walsingham was a man a woman might love, and Amelia owned her love.

A day or two had scarcely elapsed before Jack saw the two carriages, unhurt by the unexpected voyage, safe at the hotel. To his wonder, all the baggage was safe; not one morsel of the cargo, as Jack reported, had been pilfered; and the only harm done to the carriage was a small hole burnt in the carpet by a cigar. This made Jack believe that he was amongst the most extraordinary people he had ever seen: and he felt more at his ease when he found that articles of such value were within the grasp of apparently a most mutinous set of men, and yet that not one article was destroyed.

Walsingham had established himself at his father's hotel.

There was not a day that some of the party did not visit him; and after every conversation he was left by either Stanhope or Douglass with the firm conviction on their minds, that his first false step was occasioned by the bad counsel of his tutor; that poverty and false pride continued him on the course; and that once having fallen, he felt the difficulty of retrieving his character greater than continuing unsuspected in his avocation. Every allowance which an honourable man could make for one who had fallen so low was made; and day after day Walsingham began to shine a hero of romance.

"Here," said he one morning as Stanhope visited him, "here you shall see the last records of my infamy, save that which is remembered by mankind, and which is imperishable, I fear. Hot as the weather is now, I have lighted a fire; and there," he continued, as he fed the flame with the mechanical cards, and saw the false dice, the despatches, the doctor, all perish,—"would to God I could feel that the oblivion on my mind could be as dark and as mouldering as those damnable instruments!"

"It is odd," said Stanhope, "that a man of your study,—a man of your genius, I may say,—never seriously thought before how certain was discovery, and how the brand of infamy must attach itself to a man who is so conscious of his faults that his eyes never meet the glance of another's."

"You know as yet," replied Walsingham, "very little of the feelings of a regular gamester: all the pride of man gives way to the excitement—the intoxication of mind which invariably attaches itself to the gamester. I read books for no other purpose than to appear a gentleman. I read the Bible, I commented on the Scriptures, I dived into theology, with no wish to find the Spirit working within me,—but to learn by heart quotations applicable in general conversation, to blind those whose quickness might suspect me. The works of lively authors I studied, to make my conversation partake of their wit, and by robbing even the dead, enhance my own value. Every step of my life tended to perfect me in deception; and although a very considerable adept in the art, I am—even I—a mere plaything in the hands of others, who are much more dexterous than myself. The clouds of the past, thank God! begin to dissipate; there is an eye now, even in this world, to watch over my welfare, to guide me through life, an humble imitation of her virtue; and I have learnt from my father's words to believe what the really wicked never choose to credit,—that there is One above who knows the secrets of my heart. My father has

expressed a wish to see you ; he is anxious that my marriage should take place previous to his death. My return has given him fresh energy ; and there is a confidence about him, that he will live to see his son under the protection of a guardian angel. Will you see him now ?"

"I can have no objection, Walsingham, because I know my sister's sentiments : but, remember that I do not pledge myself for her. I only say she is a woman, and knows how gallantly you risked your life to save another's. You know the brave have ever a friend in woman."

CHAPTER XX.

Sir William intimated his wish to see Stanhope; and Stanhope was ushered into the sick man's apartment. The light was almost carefully excluded; for long suffering had rendered the glare of day irksome.

"Come near my bedside," said the old man: "there are but a few weeks more for me to linger on in this darkness;—to me the night and the day are as one, and that of the grave will be more welcome than the continuance of suffering. I live to have again seen my son: I have lived to the last extremity of life, and have blessed him; I have revoked all former wills, and made him my heir in all but the misery I suffered by his misconduct. He has spoken to me of your sister: he has told me of the sad event in your family, from a gamester as unprincipled as my son could have been; he has offered his hand—a hand familiar with crime; he has told you and myself the truth, and it is for us now to place him in security, beyond the fear of falling again. To his marriage I have given my consent, and await the same consent from your lips."

"I will, Sir William," said Stanhope, "be no bar to the union. I am satisfied that if we never forgave, the first false step would lead us to irretrievable ruin."

"Sir," said Sir William, "I have heard from others that you are a soldier—a man well known for your honourable feelings. I see through the eyes of others; nor have I been inactive, although a cripple in bed. I need not, I am sure, point out to you that a wholesome lesson may be learnt from my son's life. I could add anecdote to anecdote of men in the highest station who have fallen into the meanest ways from gaming. The nobleman—noble only in title, refuses to day his debts of honour, and stops a cheque the hour before its payment: between that man, and the vilest, most degraded being who ever robbed upon the highway without committing murder, there is not a shade of difference;—one lolls on sofas—is received in the society

which should spurn him; the other pays the forfeit of his crime by a life of exile and of toil, in all the severity of the penal colonies. Yet these noblemen should be marks to frighten others:—but no—they are the very people quoted by those in lower life as having cheated and still being countenanced. It is an ungrateful task to endeavour to mend the world;—let us confine ourselves to the thorough reclaiming of my son—and, I hope, your future brother-in-law."

"There is no guide so faithful as a woman. There is a watchfulness, without prying curiosity, which ever shields the wavering: it is that sex which alone can thoroughly reclaim the vicious. To one of that sex, a brighter creature, I am told, for these poor eyes will never see her—they nearly closed for ever when I saw my son—bear this token from me: if costliness enhances the value of the present, it will not be the less precious when seen. To another of your family, Mr. Douglass, bear this letter; it is the gift of a father who would erase every bad impression of a son's memory: he was seduced into public gaming by my son; his hopes have been nearly ruinous;—this will re-establish him; my son has repaid the rest. I am rich, Captain Stanhope—the world's blessings have been largely showered upon me, if riches alone constituted happiness. What avails the heaps of gold I could command now? Can the poor enfeebled old man, whose trembling limbs no longer can support him—whose eyes no longer can guide him—whose palate is dulled, whose head is bald, find solace in his wealth? No, sir, no; the only comfort in old age—the only bubble of life which rises to overflow his heart, is from his children's affection. Name but the sum, large as you may esteem it, which you think an adequate sufficiency in case of my son's relapsing, and I place it this instant in your hands, as the trustee to a settlement, and leave all and every thing to your disposition. I am sure your sister will guide my son rightly. Say before you go—give me more comfort, for, God knows, I have lacked it for years,—say that your sister shall be his wife, and if I die the next moment, I die satisfied."

Stanhope took the old man's hand; it trembled as if with palsy: he pledged himself to the match, well knowing that his sister's heart was already given.

"Now," said Sir William, "send me your lawyer: I will keep life in me to do a justice for my son. You must send for him quickly: if he is in London, hasten him. The idle and the curious flock to see a city which has survived a revolution,

and gaze with open eyes and wonderment upon the marks of musket-balls upon a wall:—how much more quickly should that man move, whose object is good towards his friend, and who shall not go unrewarded for his expedition!"

"I expect my and the family's lawyer here within a few hours," replied Stanhope; "a man whose name is exemplified in his life—Honor. Allow me now to go; this long visit has nearly exhausted you; and although I know that death is certain, yet it may be far more distant than you anticipate."

"God bless you, Captain Stanhope! It is a consolation few experience, to find, as the curtain of life is about to drop over those who have been wretched, that every moment before the lingering pall covers them from this world brings with it a happiness, robs death of half its terrors, and leaves the cold remains of a happy being to the last a tenant of the grave. I expect you to-morrow—nay, to-night, if Mr. Honor arrives: it is wise to delay a bad work, but sinful to impede an honourable one."

Stanhope left the room wondering how such a man could be the father of such a son, and how one who spoke so nobly could have married his cook out of spite. "We are curious creatures," said he to himself; "compounds of good and evil, blindly following sudden impulses, rarely taking time to consider, wasting life in frivolity, and looking at existence with greater estimation an hour before the lamp of life is extinguished.—Well met, Testy."

"How goes on the matrimonial tie, Captain Stanhope?"

"Well: it will be a match, and I hope we may live to see what influence a virtuous romp may have over a repentant gamester."

"It's a desperate throw," said Testy; "and I wish it could be done with the 'despatches,' and thus cheat to gain a certain good. You have a carriage-load of people just unloading at your hotel, with a pious mamma, scolding her children because they ran to see the performance of Mr. Punch, who is showing Charles the Tenth's head as a drinking-cup, very empty, and not so easily filled as his throne."

"Shall we see you this evening?"

"If I am wanted, command me: if not, you are better without me. Walsingham is at your house: he mends apace; his wound is nothing to his heart—the inflamation of the one increases as the other subsides."

Stanhope quickened his pace: he was fearful of the recognition of Walsingham by Louisa before she could be prepared,

and was very apprehensive that a little natural feeling might overcome all religious restraint; but she was worldly wise, and, like a careful wife, stood at the door to see the carriage unlade.

Warm was the welcome between Stanhope and herself; cordial was the grasp of the hand which he extended to Honor. He passed quickly into the Salon, and, after greeting Walton, led Walsingham away to another room. He was followed by Amelia, who would not consent to leave him for a moment. The heart of Walsingham beat quicker as he was more convinced how entirely Amelia was his own. Love had crept in when the stronger excitement was banished; he felt himself restored to society by her; he felt his father's happiness was involved in his own. He had had time for reflection; and he had sense enough to see that there is no situation in life comparable with that which is upheld by the esteem of honourable men,—that the villain might for a short time exult in undiscovered guilt, and the mean prosper in undisturbed niggardness; but that, sooner or later, the one would be despised, and the other ridiculed. He spoke in a straight forward manner to Amelia of his own surprise at the manner of life he had pursued, and wondered how he could have risked the loss of the great property he was about to inherit, for the precarious plunder of a fellow-creature; and now his reading came to aid returning virtue, and that which was before studied for ridicule, or related for effect, was turned into the right channel, and made him a thousand times more estimable to Amelia.

"You have now," she said, "to meet my sister. That meeting will be dreadful: to both it will recall a time better blotted for ever from memory. She has, by repentance and prayer, made all atonement she can in this world; and may God preserve her in the next! It is useless saying how sincerely I extend that wish to yourself. My brother will prepare her for your reception; and you have only to be natural—to be sincere: it will be a pang for a moment, and then, I trust, a total oblivion of the past, and a sincere friendship for the future."

"If I had but fallen into the guidance of such an angel as yourself, Amelia!"

"Stop, Walsingham, I pray; a year or two hence will be time enough for the remark."

"By all the powers above and below," said Mr. Honor to Stanhope, "I think the revolution has turned all your brains! There's that sailor fellow standing at the door calling himself a captain; Douglass ruined from the very step which in another

gave him his fortune; Miss Stanhope fallen in love with the only man in the whole world she ought to have avoided; you fascinated with a villain who insulted your sister; and even Mrs. Stanhope excited by the event. It's all confusion confounded; and no man can give advice, even if he was paid for it, in such an entangled case."

"Douglass," said Stanhope, "listen to Honor: we must be in a precious net when he declares he cannot disentangle it.—By-the-by, I have a present for you from Sir William Walsingham. I fancy you may now repurchase Longdale House, and laugh at the predictions of Margery Coulson."

"The barren branch of infamy is the only one of that old hag's words which have not been more than realised. I suppose if she saw my hand now, with this paper therein, she would trace a new M, and make me rich indeed."

"I tell you," said Honor, who during this conversation had been in deep meditation, his right hand having been placed across his forehead, as if to contain his ideas within his skull,—"I tell you that never did a man consent to a more desperate leap than you are about to take. Have you all consented?"

"All, except Margaret," replied Stanhope, "who says she has no objection, if she is to have no trouble. But I doubt if ever she could be dressed in time to attend the ceremony."

"Why hurry that," said Honor, "which is better delayed? why rush your sister into a marriage which has every thing against it?"

"Excepting always," said Douglass, "about four hundred thousand pounds and a baronetcy. Is it worth a man's while to sacrifice that to a pack of cards?"

"We have instances before us that such things are; we know from experience that the gamester is seldom, if ever, reclaimed. We see in Spaniards the hardy mule-driver stake his last farthing; we know noblemen existing by gaming, swindling, cheating: and why should we think better of this Walsingham, whose whole life has been one tissue of fraud and deceit, and who at this moment is only frightened, not subdued?"

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Honor," said Amelia "I have subdued him."

"There is nothing," replied Honor, "that a virtuous woman cannot effect; but you are young and giddy, more wanting a guide than being one."

"Stop, Mr. Honor; my mind is made up: do you go and make the settlements. My sister has met Mr. Walsingham:

her religion came to her aid, when her pride was about to conquer; she has forgiven him, and not one word of the past is ever to be mentioned."

"And Walton?" said Stanhope.

"He thinks Walsingham right; and that the funds will rally, and that at least twenty per cent. be turned upon the purchase."

"You are, Miss Stanhope, a strange creature!" interrupted Honor, smiling.

"I may be a strange girl; but I trust I have the good qualities of my mother. My word is pledged—my hand is given; you and the bishop must do the rest."

"Here is something Sir William has sent you, Amelia," said her brother: "I dare say it will not disgrace even your beauty."

"A bauble," replied Amelia as she opened the case and discovered a magnificent set of brilliants. "Tell the old gentleman, if he can rally and live a year, I will present him with a much more precious jewel in a reformed son."

Honor persuaded Douglass to give up the handsome present, to form a settlement for his boy, and promised to see Crimp as to the repurchase of Longdale. The melancholy of Douglass was gradually converted into a lively mirth; Margaret could neither be elevated nor depressed; and Louisa, whenever the subject was mentioned, attributed all to the goodness of Providence, who had thus miraculously rescued a sinner from perdition.

Honor was conducted by Walsingham and Stanhope to the bedside of the old baronet. It gave him new life to see the man by whose activity he yet hoped to witness his son's marriage. In regard to the settlement, he spoke with all the wisdom of age and experience, having first desired his son to leave the room. "I would not, Mr. Honor," he said, "have you settle all the money: it would imply so utter a want of confidence in my son, that he would feel the thorn for ever fretting near his heart. Neither would I have it so small, that the girl who thus ventures her happiness could ever return to even a moderate competency. I would have the settlement made so that he should not feel slighted, or Miss Stanhope placed in jeopardy. I have, Mr. Honor, long since done with gentlemen of your profession. I found the interest of the funds come in without the least trouble to me, beyond signing a power of attorney to my banker: the principal part of my wealth is therein. Here is an account of all I possess, a marriage settlement made on my first marriage; and in giving you this paper, remember I give you free permission to draw the settlement as you like. I am well aware of the

terrible risk which attends Miss Stanhope;—I know all my son's follies,—I believe in the sincerity of his repentance: but men on the couch of sickness repent, and generally relapse with returning health. I have only one hope—one consolation: he has some virtue in his blood, and sooner or later that will course properly through his veins. If he once gains a footing in society, he will never risk its loss by a recurrence to former means: his poverty might have prompted him,—his wish to place me at defiance might have seconded him; now he can no longer want,—he can no longer feel anger or penury. One thing more, Mr. Honor: remember, I will not read one word of the settlement; I leave it to you and Captain Stanhope, and feel that I am in honourable hands. From this bed I shall never move, excepting to yonder sofa and my grave. I want but little. You may leave me two thousand a year, to revert to the settlements, and the rest, with Walsingham Hall, its lands and furniture, may pass at once into the possession of my son. Go get this good work done: there is no joy in sickness like the consciousness of a good action: to restore my son is my last—my earnest wish; and I give but little if I give all I possess to effect so great an end."

Honor looked at Stanhope, and Stanhope returned the look: they understood each other, and requested Sir William to name a sum.

Even the temper of Sir William was not quite proof against this attack, and he answered pettishly, "Never! You make the sacrifice perhaps of a sister. What do I give? wealth, of which I cannot avail myself, excepting, as some old fools do, to found a charity, endow a church, or maintain a pack of rubbish called a museum, and leave their children beggars and outcasts. But the government which consents to receive such wealth, is one degree worse than the malicious fool who leaves it: it is expected to have some honour, and is the guardian of lunatics."

"We will do our best, then," said Honor, "for both parties; it does not require the time you imagine to prepare the document,—it can be done even without assistance by this time to-morrow. We want no rough copy, no engrossing on parchment, no counsel's opinion, no opposite lawyer to make delay and cause expense; the whole shall be done for nothing, and my name shall be a guarantee against errors."

They left the room, and Walsingham entered.

"Who is that?" asked the baronet.

"Your son," replied Walsingham.

"Come near to me, my son: that word brings to my old heart comfort, joy, happiness. Listen to me:—I have few weeks or days to live, and each hour robs me of my strength. I am sinking gradually, and already feel my memory impaired —my mind wavering. Before I am robbed of both, let me do a parent's act towards a repentant son. Your former life is now forgotten: you live and move as a gentleman; but habits once formed are seldom easily laid aside. You are about to marry the girl whose love for you has overstepped prudence: no one but that girl, so conscious in her own virtue, would have run the risk of marrying a professed gamester. Show by your conduct that you are sensible of this great act of sacrifice on her part: she has nothing to rely upon but your promises, not one of which as yet you have ever kept. As there is a God above in whose hands I commit my soul, so do I now swear that if our spirit is allowed to watch over those we love,—a doctrine which has been maintained and believed,—by that God I swear that if your conduct to this earthly angel who has preserved you should not be conformable to your promises to me, I will at the last and general day testify against my own son. But if you, overcome by shame for your former life, feel this regeneration and act as becomes a husband—a man—a Christian, my hands shall be lifted up in your behalf, and I would implore God to visit the punishment on me which you have deserved. There is no man so innately vicious, who has been born a gentleman, who cannot be reclaimed: retire after your marriage to the Hall, court solitude, seek reflection, remember your God. A great and a good author offers you this remark:—'A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety; and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority.'—Man," continued Sir William, "you have betrayed,—your God you have deserted: turn now with the feeling of a man to the paths you have forsaken; there is ever a hand to guide, a light to direct: it is, I tell you, in retirement that you must seek repose and confidence. 'This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves,' says Dr. Johnson, 'which has always been considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity,—from the cares of avarice and the joys of intemperance—from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.' In that I have

given you all the advice of the best of men: your own happiness is within your own reach. Go to her who has consented to be under your guidance: be kind—be generous—be attentive. Life is made up of trifles; and I would have you cautious to yield in trivial matters, and to assume your proper authority in great ones."

Walsingham, the gamester, was humbled: he threw himself upon his knees at the bedside of his almost exhausted parent; he swore to obey him—to relinquish his former ways, and to trust for repose of conscience in the rectitude of his future conduct. The hand of the old man was placed upon his son's head; and as he uttered "God bless and prosper you, and ripen the seeds of virtue into full bearing!" he fell back exhausted.

Honor kept his word: he retired to his chamber—he drew up the settlement—he placed Amelia, in case of separation arising from her husband's behaviour, in independence, whilst he left Walsingham the unshackled command of a large sum of money. The document was taken, when perfected, to Walsingham, who wished to make the settlement larger upon Amelia; but Honor had acted as the legal adviser of both parties. Sir William, who still lingered on, would not hear one word of the contents: he signed the requisite papers for the transfer of the stock to the named trustees, and he then bade them not to enter his room until he saw his daughter-in-law in her bridal attire.

It required more preparation from the milliner than the lawyer. Testy was called in, the requisite documents were got ready, and two days after this last injunction of Sir William, during which time his only attendant was his old servant, the marriage took place at the ambassador's chapel. The gaudy-dressed servants took care to stand in regular rank to receive the customary fee. The bishop performed the ceremony: Douglass, Testy, and Stanhope witnessed it; and even Margaret was seen to express herself with some animation as she surveyed the beautiful bride. "Marriage," she said, relapsing into her wonted drawl, "was a very imposing ceremony; but it required immense labour to be dressed in time."

There was no one more sincere in her prayers on that occasion than Mrs. Walton: she gave her blessing in a tone of voice subdued by religion:—she had cast off the hypocritical sanctity of the over-zealous Methodist,—she had become the meek, the penitent, the forgiving Christian.

Before the party had passed the large gates which enclose

that ground which, by legal ingenuity, is called a part of Westminster and within the diocese of the Bishop of London, Walton had broken the seal of the packet, and Douglass found his lost wealth restored to him. Honor exclaiming, as he saw the paper, "A man must be sincere when he gives up his money!" On alighting at the hotel of Sir William, Jack offered his arm to the bride on one side, as Walsingham stood on the other; and when she had passed, he stopped the eager lover, and said,—

"I'm blessed if I'm skipper of that collier yet! There's many a man, when the wind is foul, who swears he will say his prayers when he gets snug into harbour, and when there, makes sail for the grog-shop: you are not of that kidney, are you?"

"I have made many promises, Jack: trust me, I will perform them."

"Show me my daughter," said Sir William: "draw back those curtains. God of all mercies, I thank you! that gleam of light has shown me an angel: it is the last object I shall ever see, for I am blind and fast sinking. Go, leave me; take my blessing, and do not stay here to make this day a day of mourning: a reclaimed son stands before me, a daughter is given me almost at my last moment, and I leave this world in all contentment and happiness!" * * * *

Seven years have passed,—an heir to the title lives; and the baronet, who has remained in the seclusion of the country, has lived to merit the father's blessing. The estate stands near the coast; and Captain Jenkins, who had bought a cargo of coals, was seen in the Hall drinking health and prosperity to the boy, then four years old, and saying, "Well, well, I'm blessed if Miss Amelia has not scrubbed a Blackamore white!"

THE END.

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